

'ORA ET LABORA'

Greetings in Christ,

A maxim used by many athletes is 'no pain, no gain'. By which it is meant that the process of preparation for an event requires commitment, discipline and hard work if success is to be achieved.

It is no different with the journey of faith. If we wish to work toward greater spiritual fulfilment and understanding then there are a number of questions we might answer:

1. **Where am I now?**
2. **Where am I/should I be going?**
3. **How am I going to get there?**
4. **What obstacles may I face along the way?**
5. **What am I going to do when I get there?**

These questions vary little from the ones used in most appreciation processes, yet answers may come from unexpected places. **The Bible is a primary source for us in helping us to answer the faith-journey questions, for it describes the wanderings of the people of God over time. It is a template for our own lives, for the narrative of God's people is also our own story.** We therefore have the capacity to find ourselves in God's big story and thereby learn what God wants of us.

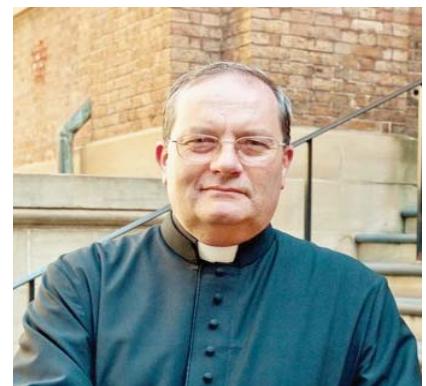
From Genesis to Revelation the Scriptures describe for us the basic human condition and the need for God. The Bible reveals that all is not right with humanity; there is selfishness, cruelty, greed and injustice, however there is also knowledge of and a hankering after a better way of life - a way that might be achieved but cannot be done without help. In religious terms, we acknowledge that there is sin (or brokenness) in our lives but that we also know things could be different. We therefore seek some sort of way

out of our predicament. It is this that **St Paul** struggles with in his Letter to the Romans:

"... I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me".
[Romans 7:18b-20]

The question then becomes: '**how do we make the transition from where we are now to where we believe God wants us to be?**' This involves reflection upon the journey of faith and identification of those things that hold us back from becoming the people that God wants us to be. Such things may not be the same for everyone; for example, some may need to transform the attitudes they have toward themselves, for others it may be the attitudes they have toward their neighbours.

All of what we do on this journey of faith is undertaken in a spirit of hope. That is, we seek an assurance that things can indeed be made right,



that we do have the capacity to change, and that God will indeed bless us both for the journey as well as when we arrive at the destination.

In this respect we focus on the life of Jesus who is the paradigm and promise of what it is to be fully human and also fully filled with the Spirit of God – a human being who died and rose to new life.

It is admitted, however, that it is possible to be a Christian and yet not engage in this transformational activity - it is to be like a runner who never goes beyond a walk. There is danger here, for if we do not grow spiritually, (just as we grow physically, emotionally and mentally), then we may find ourselves unable to cope with the spiritual challenges before us. To use the running analogy again, we simply give up walking altogether and lose the benefit that any exercise may have given us. The business of transformation therefore requires discipline, commitment and an attitude of hope.

A CHANGING CHURCH

The Anglican Church in Australia needs to think about its future. As I write this, the General Synod is meeting in Adelaide and it is hoped that through it we may face up to some of the challenges before us as a church both nationally and locally.

We also have a new Primate in **Dr Philip Freer**, Archbishop of Melbourne. We pray for him and all the leaders of our church as they seek to address the needs of both the present and the future.

It would seem that since the 1970's we have been very active analysing our situation with a large amount of research and many reports, including the work of the Church Life Survey. There has also been a number of attempts to address declining participation such as the *Decade of Evangelism*, the *Mission Shaped Church* and *Connect 09*; but with limited success. **The first three sections of the five point appreciation seem to have been addressed in some quarters, but the last two still seem to be a 'work in progress'.** We are now facing many obstacles, some of which are of our own making (such as financial mismanagement, the ramifications of abusive behaviour, disconnection with the market-place of ideas, and poor political engagement). More generally, there is the disconnection, schisms and hostility between Christian groups.

If something needs to change, how might it be achieved? The principles of confession might help us; for we need to admit that there is a problem, be prepared to change (including giving up the desire to retain our position at the exclusion of others), admit our failings and seek reconciliation, and finally do something to fix the problem. **I know that this is a big ask for the church, it is hard enough to apply such principles within a parish, leave alone across a denomination, or even between denominations!**

Of course, denominations are part of the problem.

Initially, in Australia like much of the new world, denominations were a reflection of ethnic origin and class, to which was added a political edge. In more recent times there has been a proliferation of church groupings, both denominational and independent, that have come to be more a reflection of particular theological or ecclesiastical interest and 'worship style'. **It is confusing for the outsider, especially as many groups make a claim to spiritual 'truth' while at the same time denigrating those with which they differ. How can one trust a religion that seems to be so stridently divided within itself?**

Two of the main issues here may be portrayed in the phrases '*I'm in and you're out*' and '*I'm right and you're wrong*'; the first being a statement about a person's state of salvation and the second about their beliefs or theology. Now, a concern for salvation and truth are both important things, yet what is often revealed by such commentary is a bad attitude toward God and each other. Exclusivism and arrogance are profoundly lacking in grace and tend to portray spiritual pride and a desire for power and control. It is sinful, and such sin is too often witnessed by people outside the church. Humility and vulnerability would be far more attractive attitudes in a world where the church is held with an ever increasing level of suspicion and disdain. We have some serious work to do.

The Ecumenical Movement nurtured a dialogue between different Christian groups. From around the mid 1960s through to the 1980s a growing hope for Christian cooperation and mutual support was developing, but it stalled with a rise in denominational competitiveness and rivalry. By the late 1990s many church leaders were abandoning cooperation for a greater concentration on their own denominational institutions. Perhaps it was the easy way out, as it is easier to control an institution over which

one has some authority, and near impossible to control a process in which authority is distributed between many participants.

The development of more rigidly held views on matters of belief, practice and salvation may have won the battle for church control, but it has lost the war of the church's credibility in the eyes of the wider community. We need to recover a greater degree of broad Christian cooperation coupled with a healthy respect for each other.

There have, of course, been exceptions to this, especially in rural and regional areas, where cross-denominational cooperation has been happening for many years. This has usually been because of necessity if Christian ministry is to be maintained in these places. What the church has often discovered in more remote areas is that the needs of the people and the community take precedence over the needs of the church institution, and so people have moved on. This may be a good lesson for those who live in the city also.

The Christian faith has a message of salvation for the whole world, but until we are able to relate that message in an open and meaningful way to all, we will continue preaching to a diminishing number of the converted. Theology, ecclesiology and praxis are all important in this process, but these things also need to be able to engage and be applied to a more complex world where the Christian faith and the church is not bound to ethnic, class or political constructs. In its diversity and resulting tensions the church needs a common message of salvation for the whole world.

Re-examination of the nature of creation and humanity's place in it, of God's covenants with nature and all humanity, and of the call for the church in all its diversity to be a means of God's grace to the whole world, may provide some good starting points for discussion.

The Reverend Andrew Sempell
President, Anglicans Together

ST LUKE'S MOSMAN LOOKS TO WELCOME ITS NEW RECTOR

The Reverend Dr Max Wood, former Rector of St John's Church Mudgee, has accepted the Archbishop's invitation to become the seventh Rector of St Luke's Church, Mosman, Sydney.



This followed a six months search by the parish nominators, who worked hard to find a Rector who would be compatible with St Luke's character, ethos, worship and needs.

We believed that for us, **Max Wood** was the outstanding candidate amongst those interviewed. He certainly met all the criteria. We believed Max and his wife, Danielle, would work to ensure that St Luke's engages with the wider community, especially in our efforts to present the gospel as an expression of God's love for all. **As St Luke's nominators, we were unanimous in nominating Max and, we're glad to say, the Diocesan nominators supported our nomination and the Archbishop accepted it.**

The Parish of St Luke's Mosman this year celebrates 105 years as a parish. St Luke's is an inclusive, sacramental, thinking, and mission-oriented community of faith. It has a longstanding churchmanship tradition which all our Rectors have faithfully embraced and perpetuated.

We hold firm to scripture, the Eucharist and liturgy in our faith and life. We prize biblical preaching,

order, sound liturgy (traditional and contemporary), the riches of church music and the "beauty of holiness" in our worship.

We welcome Anglicans of all traditions, Christians of all Churches, and people of other faiths or no faith. As a Parish, we seek to be compassionate and non-judgmental. Mission and social justice are important to us. We respect the equal leadership and ministry of women and men.

Churchmanship:

The Diocese rightly calls our worship tradition

Central Churchmanship and, we believe, respects it. It is a cumbersome term, but there is no better one. As one of our clergy once explained, St Luke's is "**a branch of a world Church that stands for and proclaims the Gospel in its fullness, with its wise balance between Catholic order and Evangelical zeal**". That puts us (along with most Anglican parishes in Australia) squarely in the centre of Anglicanism and Anglican practice. We are encouraged by Archbishop Glenn's view that parishes like ours have a role to play in Diocesan outreach.

Max and Danielle: Max is married to *Dr Danielle Firholz*. They have two small children, *Thomas* and *Madeleine*. Max grew up in Sydney, was educated at Trinity Grammar School, and studied Arts/Law at Macquarie University. He was ordained in 2004 in Bathurst Diocese, having previously worked as a lawyer in Sydney.

Max's theological and clinical pastoral studies took place in Morpeth and Durham. He has held ministry positions at St James' King Street, Holy Trinity, Orange, St

Augustine's, Merewether in Newcastle, and St Margaret's in Durham.

Max and Danielle met at Durham University where they were both doctoral students - Max in systematic theology and Danielle in human geography. They were married four years ago at St Margaret's Durham. Danielle is from Lauterbourg in Alsace, France. She has worked for Amnesty International in Spain. Her professional work and research projects have been with ethnic communities and the disadvantaged.

The Future: Max will be inducted



on 29 September, 2014. His appointment heralds a new era for us. We are keen to maintain the momentum of the past five years under *Bruce McAteer's* leadership and are confident that Max, Danielle and their young family will all play a part in St Luke's growth.

Until the induction of the new Rector, we continue to enjoy the leadership and ministry of *Peter Kurti*, *Lu Piper* and *Robert Alexander*.

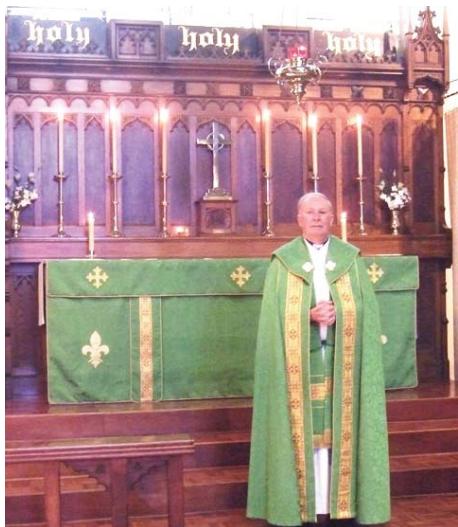
*Denise Thomas AM on behalf of
St Luke's Parish Nominators*

Photo left: Service of Dedication of St Luke's rebuilt Fincham organ - July 2013
Above: The Reverend Dr Max Wood, Dr Danielle Firholz and their children.

The Induction and Institution of the Revd Dr Max Wood by the Right Revd Dr Chris Edwards, Bishop of North Sydney - 29 September, the Feast of St Michael and All Angels.

NEWS OF MOVES IN SYDNEY AND AROUND THE CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA

A farewell Eucharist was held at St John's, Balmain on Sunday 30 March, 2014, when the Rector, the Reverend James Butt, was sent off in a fanfare of music.



The parishioners of St John's give thanks for Fr James's faithful ministry. For 15 years he pastored the parish with love, friendship and acceptance. His love of sacred music, his reverence for the sacraments and his attention to what he called, "good catholic order" have enriched all aspects of worship and parish life at St John'. He will be missed.

Trained at St Mark's Theological College, Canberra he was made deacon in St Saviour's Cathedral, Goulburn and in December 1990 and priested in February 1992.

Following his ordination Fr James took up a placement as Assistant Priest at St Alban's Epping - an ideal introduction to priestly life. James spent seven happy years there, serving the parish, honing his skills as a priest and making many longstanding friends who then supported his ministry at St John's.

James Butt was inducted as Rector of St John's, Balmain Parish on 23 April 1999.

St John the Evangelist (1882) is an Anglican Church in the Catholic tradition on the Balmain Peninsula. Once a thriving parish in a working class area, by 1999 St John's was a

church struggling to survive in a growing middle class suburb. The congregation was aging and dying out. What survived, was the Anglo-Catholic tradition, a tradition that the parish wished to maintain.

Fr James is a kind and compassionate person, but also a bit of a taskmaster. In his years as Rector he rallied and inspired the parishioners into achieving things they would have thought impossible. He is also a man of vision.

It did not take long for Fr James to realise that the church organ was in dire need of major restoration. To restore the organ became his passion and "pipe dream". **The result has been a wonderfully restored organ rededicated on 4 November 2012, a legacy to his vision and determination.**

On his retirement, **Fr James** can be proud of his many accomplishments at St John's. The St John's of 2014 is very different to the St John's of 1999. Although still small, the parish has grown and stabilised, major improvements have been made to the fabric of the buildings; a Sunday school established; tired vestments and hymnbooks have been replaced and more. **While these have been welcome and needed improvements, it is for his ministry that he will be best remembered.**

With his retirement, life for Fr James will come full cycle. He moved back to Canberra in April and will re-establish his past connections with the Parish of All Saints' Church, Ainslie, ACT.

Dorothy Straesser

St John, the Evangelist, Balmain

SYDNEY MOW JOINS SOCIAL MEDIA
Readers on Facebook, can now access a Sydney MOW site. Go to: MOW Movement for the Ordination of Women.

DIOCESE OF ROCKHAMPTON
has elected the **Reverend David Robinson** to be the twelfth Bishop of the Diocese. He is currently the Ministry Formation Coordinator at St Mark's National Theological Centre in Canberra.



Janet & David Robinson

David has had extensive pastoral experience in country ministry; has a deep interest in church growth, education and leadership formation and cross cultural-work particularly with indigenous people.

Consecration will be on September 2, Feast of New Guinea Martyrs.

DIOCESE OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY has elected its sixth Bishop. He is the **Reverend Gregory Anderson** who has been the Head of the Department of Mission at Moore Theological College, Sydney since 2007.



Gregory Anderson

He has had a longstanding interest in the Aboriginal church and in ministry in the Territory. He and his wife, Annette, worked there in the 1990's.

The consecration date has yet to be announced.

The Sydney Movement for the Ordination of Women Meets with Sydney's New Archbishop

The election of a new Archbishop of Sydney in 2013 was naturally a subject of great interest to those Anglicans in Sydney, who believe that women are fit to be ordained to all three orders - deacon, priest and bishop.

At the MOW (Sydney) AGM in 2013, we elected our first woman priest as Convenor – the Rev'd Lu Piper, ordained in the Diocese of Newcastle in 1995.

So MOW, with a new Convenor, met a new Archbishop, Glen Davies on 14th April 2014.

MOW was represented at this meeting, by the Rev'd Lu Piper, Rosemary Christmas and Elaine Peterson. There was a warm and gracious meeting lasting of an hour and a quarter, which was both frank and friendly throughout. The happy atmosphere was quickly created by Glenn and Rosemary reminiscing about their youthful friendship in the same parish many years ago. MOW's first president, Patricia Brennan had been part of this group.

We were thus able to achieve our first goal - discussing what Sydney MOW hoped might happen during his episcopate. We acknowledged the entrenched opposition of the majority of the current synod to the priesting of women, but hoped for a more open acceptance of the real diversity of theological views on this issue and some capacity to co-exist in a more harmonious way.

The specific issues we raised included:

-The lack of a proper career path for women in ministry.

- The real pastoral need women may have of female priestly guidance in dealing with very serious personal issues.

- That the diocesan view of women is so strongly counter-cultural to the

place of women in today's society that it becomes a barrier to understanding the Gospel.

- Hospitality to fully ordained women visiting or residing in the diocese.

The Archbishop repeated his assurance that he saw himself as archbishop for all groups in the diocese and that we should be able to co-exist. He explained that his policy was that women, can both preach and, if ordained as priest, preside, where they are authorised by the rector of a parish, who has the authority to make these decisions. We had been aware that this appeared to be the current position, but it was helpful to hear it from his own lips. He suggested that there was much more concern from those opposed to MOW about women "preaching" than about their "presiding".

Archbishop Davies reviewed the history of the various changes to the legal situation over the past century. He emphasised that our task was to change the mind of synod, although making it clear that he did not expect there would be a change during his "short episcopacy". He acknowledged our obvious difficulty, but said that participating by being involved in "acceptable" motions was a possible long term way forward.

The Archbishop continues to assert his belief that women should not be priests, but his approach to those that are, including Lu Piper, is markedly collegial. He listened intently to what we were saying, but did appear to think that most deacons in Sydney were content with their situation.

One Sydney parish that we know of has taken advantage of the more open approach mentioned above by having *only women* preach and in some cases, preside, over the Lent/Easter period. The Reverend *Cliff Stratton* of St Luke's Church,

Concord invited ten women to preach at all services from Ash Wednesday to Easter Day, and if they were priests, to preside at the sacrament.

There were: - five priests – the Reverends *Val Tibbey*, *Colonel Catie Inches-Ogden*, *Lu Piper*, *Anastasia Webster-Hawes* and *Jane Chapman*; two deacons – the Reverends *Sue Emeleus* and *Kimberly Sawyer*; one Pastoral Worker - *Mrs Glenda Bolitho* and two Laywomen - *Dr Ruth Shatford* and *Miss Elaine Peterson*.

The experience was warmly appreciated by the parishioners. The Parish Council had already passed a motion saying that women were welcome to preach or preside at the discretion of the Rector. Cliff's leadership and enthusiasm for the project was unbounded.

Past experience in our diocese has highlighted the crucial role of the parish rector in providing and encouraging the *experience* of women's ordained ministry. This may have meant offering visiting ordained women the opportunity to preach, openly supporting the idea of ordained women and taking a positive part in synod debates on this topic. My salute to the pioneers of the 80's and 90's. I remember *Clive Harcourt Norton*, *John Cornish*, *John McIntyre*, *Bill Lawton* and *Phillip Bradford* and in more recent years, *Chris Albany* and *Gwilym Henry Edwards*. There were others that I have missed knowing.

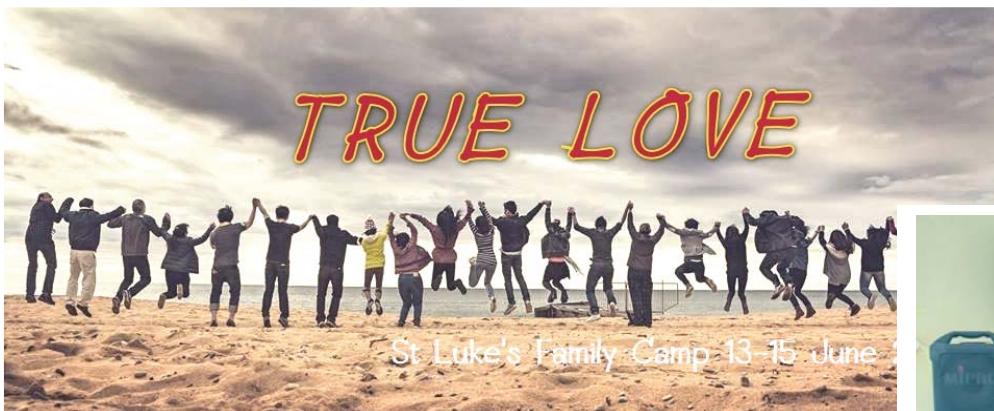
For most laypeople, the real experience of the ministry of ordained women creates acceptance of this ministry.

In this new era, perhaps more parishes without a woman on the staff will consider taking the plunge.

Elaine Peterson,
St Lukes's Church Concord/Burwood

THAI CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY OF ST LUKE'S CHURCH, ENMORE

organizes Parish Family Camp



Over the weekend 13-15 June 2014 members of **St Luke's congregation and other interested Thai people** came together at Collaroy NSW. It was a time of great fellowship, fun and experiencing unconditional Christian love for all people.

A photographic competition tells something of the weekend



Fun & Games



Rev'd David Gill lectures



Study

Recreation on the beach



Resident Aliens – *Life in the Christian Colony*

(Expanded 25th Anniversary edition) 2014 by Stanley Hauerwas and William H. Willimon; Abingdon Press, Nashville, USA

Tempted by *Phillip Bradford's* review of *Stanley Hauerwas'* memoir (*Hannah's Child*) in the March Newsletter, I downloaded it onto my kindle. *Hauerwas*, a longstanding theological academic, is now also a Canon in the Episcopalian Church, USA. I was so drawn by *Hauerwas'* ideas, I tracked him on the internet and cheekily sent him an email, asking him to recommend one of his books on theology which would be 'accessible' to a lay person. *Hauerwas* very kindly sent a delightful reply, recommending '**Resident Aliens**', written jointly with a friend and colleague *William Willimon*, now a Bishop in the United Methodist Church, USA. The book, written 25 years ago, was re-released this year with additional material. This recent release is available in electronic versions; a hard copy may have to be ordered.

Expanded 25th Anniversary Edition

Stanley Hauerwas
William H. Willimon

Resident Aliens

A provocative Christian assessment of culture and ministry for people who know that something is wrong

Life in the Christian Colony

I requested a book on theology; I got one on the church; it's one of the best theological books I've read. Put aside Tillich-type thinking, the authors argue; that is, stop trying to better adapt our theological systems to be more acceptable to the modern world. Pick up Barth who argued that our challenge is to create a new and better church. Churches should focus on developing Christian life and community rather than attempting to reform secular culture. Instead of attempting to transform government, the role of

Christians is to live lives which model the love of Christ.

Hauerwas and *Willimon* give thanks that the church is now largely irrelevant in the modern world. "The loss of Christendom gives us a joyful opportunity to reclaim the freedom to proclaim the gospel in a way in which we cannot when the main social task of the church is to serve as one among many helpful props for the state".. The church has not transformed the world – the world has tamed the church. For example, the authors contend that the acceptance by most Christians in the US of the atomic bomb as being "for the greater good" "...was the sign of our [the church's] moral incapacitation, an open admission that we had lost the will and the resources to resist vast evil."

The state never asks the question, first and foremost: "*Is what we are proposing how God would act?*" In the Sermon on the Mount, Christ lay down the blue print for how God's people on earth should view the world and therefore what are the right questions. The Sermon "brings the boundaries between the world and the church into clear relief". **Christ starts with: "You have heard it said, ... But I say to you..."**. The Sermon tells us this is the way God is. We are called to be an alien people, a counter-cultural phenomenon, shaped by a story of how God is with us.

Here are a series of quotes to hint at what the authors say the church should be like.

"The 'confessing' church finds its main political task to lie, not in the personal transformation of individual hearts or the modification of society, but rather in the congregation's determination to worship Christ in all things." "Our Sunday worship has a way of reminding us, in the most explicit and ecclesial of ways, of the source of

our power, the peculiar nature of our solutions to what ails the world." "The Church is a worshipping community and through its continuing weekly practice of worship, it leads its community to treat each other and respond to the world as God would have us."

Retell the stories of the saints, because one of the best ways to know God is to take a good look at the lives of those whom God has claimed.

Only super-human heroes could live according to the precepts in the Sermon on the Mount; be perfect as God is perfect and deal with others as God would. Our Christian life is formed around a community. This is not simply togetherness; "it is about disciplining our wants and needs in congruence with a true story which gives us the resources to lead truthful lives." Not for church members the modern approach of situational ethics (I'll decide what is best for me). Leave that to the "it's all about me" world. Our ethics are grounded in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ.

This book is a must for clergy. The chapter on the implications for ministry expresses deep concern about the significant loss of clergy to cynicism, exhaustion and self-hate, as clergy are ground down by consumer-oriented, individually-focussed, self-indulgent, cosy clubs that characterize many churches. Ministry is nothing less than participation in the story of God. The Minister's role is primarily to lead the *worshipping community*, which is "*the crucible to engender individual conversion into the Body.*" "*Only when the church enacts its scandalous Jesus-centred tradition will it truly be the Body of Christ and transform the world.*" ***If I were a Rector, I would make this book compulsory reading for my congregation.***

Lyn Bannerman,
Christ Church St Laurence, Sydney

DIOCESE OF SYDNEY SYNOD – OCTOBER 2014 –

Calling all Sydney Reps!

Call me a “Synod tragic” if you like. Tell me I need to “get a life”. Too true. But may I encourage ALL Synod members, clergy and lay, to be at Synod as far as possible at every session. Have you blanked out the days in your diaries yet? (13, 14 & 15; and 20 & 21 Oct; afternoon and evening sessions). **Why?** Apart from the obvious fact that your church community expects it of you (or should), let me give you some other good reasons.

THIS IS A VERY IMPORTANT SYNOD AS IT IS AN ‘ELECTION’ SYNOD.

The 2014 Synod is the first in the triennium. All positions on Diocesan Committees, Boards and Councils, subject to election by Synod, will be open this Synod for nominations. It is important that the composition of diocesan committees reflects some of the diversity within the Diocese. It is defeatist to say there is no point nominating or voting because the Anglican Church League (ACL), representing the dominant conservative Sydney position, has previously successfully controlled the outcome - nominating to all positions and circulating its how-to-vote ticket.

There are different viewpoints within our diocese. Anglicans Together, an independent organization within the diocese “**values an inclusive and diverse expression of Anglicanism.**” It wishes to show that God, as seen in the Lord Jesus Christ, is not a God that can be defined by one point of view. The genius of the Anglican style is that we can draw upon the revelation of God to all God’s people.

All Synod members can put forward nominations and thoughtfully vote. There is an ongoing opportunity to ensure the greater diversity for Diocesan positions. Nominations are called for in advance – yes it is worthwhile to read these papers carefully and to submit names of suitably qualified people for positions – please turn your mind to it when the papers arrive. And,

most importantly, cast your vote as every vote counts. Voting papers are distributed on day one. Plan to get yours; plan to vote.

Your vote can be CRITICAL on important issues before Synod. Sometimes a decision swings on a handful of people. You can make a difference, just by being there to vote.

SOME KEY ISSUES FOR SYNOD THIS YEAR

- The Diocesan Mission** will be reviewed and a proposal for an ongoing mission will be placed to Synod. Think about this – the last Mission fell far short of its goals for increased church membership. To what degree has the exclusivity of thinking in Sydney Diocese been a negative out there in the community? **What would a Mission be like that was welcoming and encouraging of diversity.**

Governance Policy for Diocesan Organisations.

Ever since the disastrous financial losses a few years back there have been many attempts to get the management of organisations more transparent and accountable, in line with community expectations and standards.

This Policy is one such attempt but it continues to be conservative in its nature, somewhat protective of the organisations, and too detailed rather than laying out clear principles.

It will be up for debate and to be voted on again.

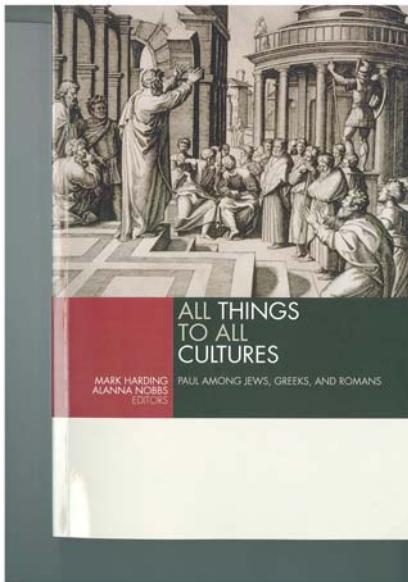
- Connected with this Policy is a strong push to require that all alumni members on School**

Boards should be signed up “born-again” Christians.

Currently alumni Board members need only to agree to work within, and be respectful of, the Christian ethos). This was hotly debated last year and, as the debate could not be concluded in the time allocated, it was deferred to another day of Synod. Some Synod members who were very concerned about this push had not planned to be present at the new time for continuing the debate, and therefore missed the vote. It was decided by a majority of less than 10 (with literally several hundred people voting) that, in future, alumni members must agree to sign a proposed “statement of faith”. Many members consider this is a further example of reducing diversity of thinking and are appalled with the decision that the valuable contribution of many alumni to date will now be rejected. While not required to do so, *Archbishop Davies* (President of Synod) wisely decided that, as the vote was so close, it should come back for renewed debate in 2014.

- Another important debate this year will be a proposal for FUNDING PRINCIPLES – guidance on how Synod should determine what grants will be made from the significant bucket of funds available (the Diocesan Endowment). This is another area where a number of us have pushed hard for greater transparency and accountability – why do certain groups get huge amounts of grants, particularly those with significant resources already. What do they actually use them for, what acquittals are required?**

(Cont. p.9)



ALL THINGS TO ALL CULTURES:

Paul among Jews, Greeks, and Romans

(Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), editors: Mark Harding and Alanna Nobbs

Paul over the last hundred and fifty years, and the theology of the Pauline corpus.

The book is aimed as a resource primarily for undergraduates in theology or history, but the bibliographies and the wider setting of the issues will make it useful for scholars at all levels.

In view of the scholarly audience we have retained quotations in the original Greek.

Contributors:

Mike Bird (Ridley, Melbourne), “Romans”

Cavan Concannon (Duke University), “The Archaeology of the Pauline Mission”

David Eastman (Ohio Wesleyan University) “Pauline Chronology”

Chris Forbes (Macquarie University), “Paul among the Greeks”

Mark Harding (Australian College of Theology) “The Pastoral Epistles”

Tim Harris (Diocese of Adelaide), “Pauline Theology”

Jim Harrison (Sydney College of Divinity), “Paul among the Romans”

Paul McKechnie (Macquarie University), “Paul among the Jews”

Brent Nongbri (Macquarie University), “Letter Manuscripts”

Ian Smith (Christ College, Burwood), “The Later Pauline Epistles”

Murray Smith (Christ College, Burwood), “The Thessalonian Correspondence”, “Paul in the Twenty-First Century”

Larry Welborn (Fordham University), “The Corinthian Correspondence”

Appendices by **Paul Barnett** on Paul in the book of Acts and Paul’s Asian Epistles.

This book is available from Koorong Books - \$60, or from Macquarie Uni Co-op bookshop, or Amazon.

The editors have an agreement with Eerdmans to deliver a third volume: *Into all the World: Emergent Christianity in its Jewish and Greco-Roman Context*. It is expected to appear in late 2015.

Mark Harding
Dean & CEO
Australian College of Theology

Continued from p. 8

Take your role as a Synod member and representative of your parish seriously. Your vote can make a difference. You do not need to get up and speak. There is no shortage of others who will do that. Your presence is important.

ARE YOU A NEW MEMBER OF SYNOD THIS YEAR? The first year (or two, or three!) can be very intimidating as one tries to get your head around the complex parliamentary style procedures. Further, you may feel uncertain about the elections (“I don’t know any of these people on the ballot paper”) or you may want to talk through with someone some of the issues being debated before they go to a vote.

There will be a SYNOD FORUM, promoted by Anglicans Together, in the city, in St James’ Hall, Philip Street, Sydney on Sunday, 5th October at 3.00 pm. This will be an opportunity to meet other Synod representatives and discuss the Synod agenda.

Lyn Bannerman,
Lay Synod Representative,
Christ Church St Laurence.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

ANGLICANS TOGETHER INC.

SUNDAY, 5th October, 2014

2.30 PM

Followed by SYNOD FORUM

St James Hall, Philip Street, Sydney

NEWSLETTER published by
ANGLICANS TOGETHER INC

Opinions expressed are those of
contributors.

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PO Box 429 Glebe NSW 2037

CHRISTIANITY – A RELIGION OF OUTREACH

The Gospel according to Matthew - Chapter 28

Sermon preached at St Peter's Church, Cremorne on Trinity Sunday by the Reverend Dr Michael Spence*

For a Christian there is, I am afraid, no such thing as private religion. Christianity has, from the start, been a religion of outreach.

At the heart of the Christian faith is a vision of God as three in one, as trinity, and today is Trinity Sunday when we celebrate that doctrine.

Now to many the notion of the trinity comes across as a kind of theologians' puzzle but it is core to the Christian understanding of reality. We affirm that relationship is ontologically central; that everything finds its identity in relationship; that I am who I am because I am father and son and friend and brother and friend and ultimately a child of God. Interestingly even modern physics is discovering more about the relationality of all things.

As Christians, we can affirm that relationship is central because God is triune and God is love. God is love because from before all time the Father has been pouring himself out in love for the Spirit and the Son, the Son in love with the Father and the Spirit; and the Spirit in love with the Father and the Son. This is love shared and then shared still more. Without the doctrine of the trinity, it would be impossible to affirm that God is love without in some way making God ontologically dependent upon creation in a way that would diminish his self-sufficiency. But with the doctrine of the trinity we have a vision of reality in which a relationship of self-giving love, a relationship of perfect mutuality, a relationship of perfect harmony, is central to all reality.

Now if our vision of God is a vision of self-giving love, then creation becomes an act of love overflowing. Just as a child is, in the best of circumstances, the product of the loving embrace of a father and a mother, so creation is the product of the overflowing love

of the Father, the Son and the Spirit. As **Hannah Bacon** puts it:

"If God's very being is relational and other-ward then the love shared within the triune community should not be viewed as something separate from God's love for the world. The love shared within the Trinity reaches out to embrace humanity also."

Creation is, if you like, an act of outreach. It is an outpouring of the love of God.

Within that pattern, the calling of Israel and then the incarnation of Jesus also make sense as a part of the outreach, the self-giving of God. Israel is called, not for her own benefit, but to be a light to the nations, and to call humanity back to its creator. Jesus is sent to fulfill the mission of Israel and to draw humanity back into the love of God. **John 12:32** says: "And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." God is a God who reaches out to draw us into a relationship of love and to find our identity in the central relationship, the love that binds the Father, Son and Spirit.

It is in this context that the great commission that Jesus gives the church in Matthew 28 is to be understood. Christianity cannot be a private religion. It is a religion of outreach.

It is a religion that, through the power of the Spirit, and the grace of the Son, takes the love of the Father to a tired and broken world. **Evangelism is not about recruiting people to fill the pews on a Sunday morning.** It is about sharing the love of God with a desperate world, over which Jesus has been given authority. **Paul puts that point beautifully in 2 Corinthians 5:**

"Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade others. ...For Christ's love compels

us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died."

In other words, a great rush of the love that binds the Trinity sends Jesus to the cross and back and propels the church out into the world in service and to 'make disciples'. A disciple is literally a 'learner', and the disciples, learning to obey the commands of Jesus, in which perfect freedom are found, are to make disciples of others. And in doing so, they are to baptize them, appropriately, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; giving them a new identity drawn from the triune love.

If all that is right, then mission is not somehow an add on, something we do when the numbers get a bit low, or a compulsory but rather unpleasant part of the Christian tradition, it is central to reflecting the very nature of the God whose property is to seek and to save the lost.

So why are we so reluctant to be involved in outreach, in mission? I think that the core reason is that we are insufficiently captured by the love of God.

I wonder if you have known people who are simply alright with the grace of God and with the fact that God loves them with a deep and identity forming love? My experience of such people is that evangelism simply flows out of who they are. They cannot help but speak of the love of God any more than a proud parent can help speaking of their child, or a football fan their team. The *'love of Christ compels them.'* One of the characteristics of those people is that they are often very winsome. There is something attractive, and infectious, about someone who is deeply in love, and keen to share it.

In these days the world is hungry for leadership, for someone to follow, and Jesus has been given all authority.

In these days the world is hungry to live well and to have healing for our brokenness: Jesus offers healing and a pattern for life.

The world is hungry to identity and Christians can help people find it in the grounding, secure, love of God.

But, of course, evangelism can often be a frightening business. Within a relatively short period, the church had grown throughout the Roman world, but the blood of many martyrs had also been spilled. That is why the concluding promise of Matthew is so important. In **Matthew 1:23** Jesus is called ‘Emmanuel’ or ‘God with us’. At the opposite end of the book, in **Matthew 28:20**, Jesus is declared still, by his Spirit, to be ‘*God with us*’ to the end of the age. Take the bold step of sharing your faith, call the world to submit to the authority of the risen Christ and to obey his teaching, and Jesus promises that he will be alongside you, sustaining and keeping you going.

Of course, not all methods of evangelism are equally faithful to the self-giving love of God. We are to ‘make’ disciples. That word ‘make’ has been problematic throughout the history of the church. To some it suggests compulsion of one kind or another. But the grace of God is freely available and the only compulsion involved in making disciples is the powerful draw of the love of God.

God has never compelled us to join in the love of the Trinity, but has wooed us, loved us into loving, come seeking us when we were lost, and finally accepted on the cross the cost of our rejection. Evangelism involves ‘making’ disciples, but we must ‘make’ disciples with the gracious, self-giving love of God our hallmark. The question we must ask of any situation is “*How do we call this person or that to submit to*

the authority of Jesus, how do we teach them to obey his commands, in a way that reflects his grace and his love?” The answer to that question will vary enormously depending upon the situation, but it is the question by which all evangelism must be assessed. The approach to evangelism that I like best is summed up in **1 Peter chapter 3:**

“Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.”

We may not all be **Billy Graham**, but we can all, and we must, be prepared to give an account of the hope that is within us. And that hope must be evident enough in the way in which we treat others in this tired old broken world.

Finally, we have to admit, that not all evangelism will be successful. The love of God makes room even for its own rejection. It would not, in any other way, be love. That is why **verse 17 of this passage is so important**, though it has long puzzled commentators. “*When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted.*” Commenting on this verse **David Hill** writes:

“This is in accordance with what is said of christophanies in the New Testament generally; they were not of such a kind as to make doubt utterly impossible.”

In other words, God does no force himself on the unwilling: it is love he wants, and love involves a free response. That means that even in the midst of a resurrection appearance, even in the presence of the risen Christ, **doubt was not only possible, but the experience of some of the disciples.**

The important thing about mission is to remember that ours is the job of faithfulness and that is measured by how we submit to his authority and teach his commands. It is not measured in the numbers of disciples that we make.

So I challenge you. As you go out this week remember that you serve an outpouring God.

Remember that outreach is part of your Christian identity as the love that binds the Trinity, that poured out in creation, that overflowed in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, pours out by his Spirit through

Christianity has never been a private religion: outreach is at its heart.

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that [Jesus] has commanded ... And remember, [he is] with you always, to the end of the age.”

* Vice Chancellor, Sydney University

**You are invited to the
ANGLICANS
TOGETHER DINNER
THURSDAY,
25 SEPTEMBER 2014
7.00 pm for 7.30 pm
Guest Speaker:**



**ARCHBISHOP GLEN
DAVIES**
Archbishop of Sydney

*City Tattersells Club,
'Celebrity Lounge'
Cnr Pitt & Market Streets, Sydney*

**COST: \$65.00 pp (\$60 Conc.)
(Buy own drinks at Bar)**

**PAYMENT WITH BOOKINGS
BY 18 SEPTEMBER 2014**

**Cheques payable to:
ANGLICANS TOGETHER INC.
C/- St James' Church Office, Level 1
69-171 Philip St Sydney 2000
Telephone: 02 8227 1300**



TRINITY SUNDAY

A Reflection

After the first Easter, the Jewish festival of Pentecost was forever changed and became, for Christians,

THE DAY OF THE COMING OF THE SPIRIT.

PENTECOST for God's people was harvest week and the ingathering of the first fruits of the harvest.

The day changed with the great signs of the Coming of the Spirit of God - in wind, fire and speech.

The harvest thus became completely new as people responded to the preaching of a transformed Peter and all the disciples, proclaiming the power of the Risen Lamb of God to save and heal. There was no precedent for that day. The preaching went on for the week of the Pentecost celebrations, and on the first day alone thousands responded.

In the face of such excitement the Church in its questionable wisdom follows with Trinity Sunday! I have grappled with the apparently desiccated and two-dimensional nature of this idea. Three in one and One in three persons readily turn into a triangular shape enclosed in a circle. Triangles however represented have strength and simplicity but seem truly inadequate to express the many-dimensional idea of Jesus among us and finally victorious over death, God enfolding us as Father yet above and beyond our world and the Spirit of God within Christians and the church universal.

The community of oneness, that we only faintly understand, is much more dynamically represented by the artist and iconist, Rublev with his courteous meal.

PENTECOST was followed by **Trinity Sunday** then the 'Weeks after Trinity' in our Prayer Book. Later 'Ordinary' Weeks followed - which also seemed a misnomer. Reason prevailed and **now we celebrate the 'Weeks after Pentecost'**, giving the period, before the bells ring for Advent, their proper solemnity as the Great Weeks of the Church active in the world.

TRINITY as an idea is revelatory and represents our new understanding of God. It is such a central outcome of the Day of the Spirit's Coming that it is rightly placed straight after Pentecost, - not to obscure it - but to inspire and inform our thinking about the place of the Spirit in our lives as Church, and therefore in the world. If we think of God in Community as the most dynamic and creative relationship imaginable, perhaps then we come near to thinking about how the **Coming of the Kingdom of God** is changing our world.



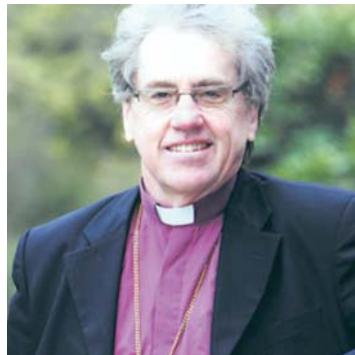
Rosemary Bradford tssf

VALE

John McIntyre, ThL, BD(Lond), MTh

Bishop of Gippsland, Victoria

A former Rector of St Saviour Church Redfern, Sydney, where he served the people for 15 years – a respected and loved leader in a diverse community. Fearless in speaking out for those who were marginalized.



A person of deep faith, a caring pastor, a friend of the marginalized who longed for and worked for justice.

Requiescat in pace