

St. Mary's  *Parish news*

Patronal Edition 2018



*The Mary Chapel Icon:
Virgin and Child, written by Pavlos Dimitriadis*

From the Vicar

Welcome to this Patronal Festival edition of the Parish News.



The chilliness of winter draws to its end, and soon we will enjoy the new life that comes with the Spring. In the Northern Hemisphere, Springtime and Easter coincide, which is at least part of the reason for the liturgical calendar being structured as it is. Just as Australians will sometimes celebrate “Christmas in June”, in some respects it might make sense for those of us south of the equator to move the Pascal season from late March and April to late September and October! The chances of that ever happening are probably nil, with established patterns firmly set. It remains true however that just as Christmas in the sun feels quite different from Christmas in the snow, so the lack of festal emphasis in Spring can make some (me at least!) feel as though we are missing out, at least a little, on the liturgical impact of the increasing light and warmth.

Thank goodness, then, for the Patronal Festival! This mid-August highlight, as the days are just beginning to lengthen, may serve to remind us that winter and its

attendant drabness have not much longer to run. May the day also inspire each of us to look afresh at the world around us, and at the church that serves it. As Mary did, may we respond to God's call to loving service, and bring God's Word to the world.

- *Fr Craig D'Alton*

Occasional Series: Churches dedicated to our Lady

The Cathedral Church of St Mary Leon

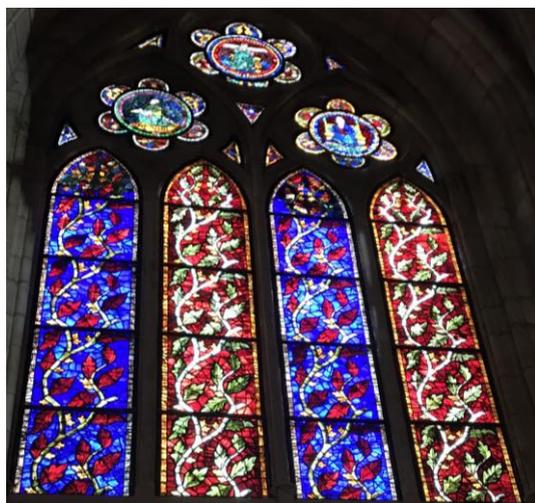
By Christine Storey



In June this year, Elsdon and I had an inspirational journey through north-western Spain and Portugal, exploring medieval cathedrals and monasteries. The

Cathedral dedicated to St Mary (Santa Maria de la Regla [regla = rule/regal) in Leon, Spain, exemplified to us "beauty in holiness" as referred to by Fr Craig recently. This place of worship clearly has been, and remains, a much loved and cherished Cathedral by the people of Leon throughout the ages. Leon was the capital of Castille and hosted one of the first Parliaments in European History in 1188, however the city's importance declined from the early 14th century as the Court gradually, increasingly,

centred on Madrid. Reading the history of this Cathedral, we learnt that it was built on an ancient site, firstly where the Romans built extensive public baths, occupying a site larger than that of the current Cathedral. In the late 1st millennium, the second use of the site was when the Christian King Ordone converted the baths into his palace. When his army finally defeated the Moors in 916, as a thank-offering to God, King Ordone handed over his palace and provided funds so that a Cathedral dedicated to Santa Maria de la Regla could be erected. The Cathedral was presided over by Benedictine monks.



The current Gothic structure is the 3rd and final Cathedral to be built on this site, mostly between 1255 - 1302, and is considered to have been designed by “Enrique” of France who worked closely with the bishop of the time,

Bishop Martin Fernandez. The bishop by all accounts clearly had a great love for ecclesiastical architecture and collaborated intimately with the architect to create this “beauty in holiness”.

Inspired by French Gothic Cathedrals of the time such as that at Chartres (famous for its glorious stained glass), the

Leon Cathedral is breathtakingly beautiful as one steps into the lofty internal space. Lit with 1,800 square meters of the most exquisite, expansive stained glass, with rich greens, reds and blues (the iPhone photographs shown do not give these windows justice!), and their transmitted light playing on the interior limestone walls, the Cathedral evokes a sense of peace, joy and wonder. According to our guidebook, the windows were designed to recall St John's vision in Revelations of the heavenly Jerusalem, where the walls shone brightly with precious stones and rich metals, to carry the faithful to a completely different world from that which exists outside. There are 128 stained glass windows in total, incorporated within a fragile structure supported externally by flying buttresses. These windows convey narratives relating to the life of Christ, the Virgin Mary, prophets, apostles and saints, and these themes are a particular feature of the 4 rose windows, located at the East and West ends and in the two transepts. The addition of a centrally located baroque choir has been the only major internal modification since the 14th century.

Yet this exquisite structure is also very fragile, mainly due to the vast expanse of glass, and maintaining this glorious Cathedral has been made all the more difficult by Leon's relatively harsh climate, and the damage suffered during the 1755 Lisbon earthquake. This Cathedral was the first religious National Monument to be declared by Spain in 1844, and the Cathedral then closed for the "Grand

Restoration” from 1859 – 1901. Its reopening was not only celebrated by Special Liturgical Services within the Cathedral itself, but was also celebrated by the townspeople with 3 days of community events!

This Cathedral commands a pivotal focus within the town square, and historically the diocese has provided healthcare and education to the people of Leon. The Hospital HM Regla is a diocesan Hospital that has been providing care for the sick for centuries. It is located between the ancient Roman city walls and the east end of the Cathedral itself, and inside, behind its historic limestone façade, a streamlined modern hospital is revealed.

Leon Cathedral is also one of the sites that may be visited by those undertaking the “Camino de Santiago”. The pilgrims were readily identifiable during our visit, looking lean and tanned, bearing substantial backpacks on which a scallop shell hung, and carrying a staff - both ancient symbols of this pilgrimage. The Camino Frances commences in south-western France and continues through the Castilla y Leon, through the city of Leon, to Santiago de Compostela on Spain’s Atlantic coast.



This pilgrimage has continued for more than a thousand years. A 13th century Latin poem described the Camino as “The door is open to all, to sick and healthy, not only to Christians, but also to pagans, Jews, heretics and vagabonds.” The height of popularity of the Camino was in the 11th and 12th centuries, however numbers declined dramatically during the Reformation, and by the 19th century the tradition had almost petered out. Remarkably the tradition of the Camino has been revived from the late 20th century, and the motivation seems to be to undertake a personal, spiritual journey, rather than being necessarily religious.

The exquisitely beautiful Leon Cathedral of St Mary has stood as a place of worship, cherished and revered by the faithful of Leon, and as an inspiration to sojourners for over 700 years, despite its fragile structure, perhaps as it symbolises Christian life itself.

Stories and News from around the Parish

A Holy Week on Malta

By Robert Gribben

Susan and I had a more than usually interesting Easter this year. After a Palm Sunday in Cambridge (and a eucharist in the church where we married), with Rowan Williams presiding, we flew into Malta for Holy Week, a long way from our normal liturgically-respectable Easter. The three great days of Easter began, as usual, on Maundy Thursday night with the ceremony of the washing of the (male) feet – and for that we went to the church up the steps from our Air BnB on Senglea, one of two narrow peninsulas which reach out across the harbour towards Valletta (reachable by ferry). On Good Friday we attended St Paul’s Anglican Co-Cathedral in Valetta for the (too) solemn English service. But as the sun began to set, back on Senglea, we watched, with literally hundreds of locals, the procession of the Passion. Near-lifesize figures or tableaux, usually kept in side-chapels of Our Lady of Victory Catholic Church on the summit, were brought out on platforms and borne on poles by teams of men. Each moved out in order into the square, down and up the road the length of the promontory, and back along the upper road to Our Lady’s church, taking brief rests on the way. Each tableau was preceded by a small group of children, and a choir led the chanting of a hymn. There were brass bands and drums to keep the beat, and colourful banners. And everywhere,

walking, singing, looking, the old and the young, mothers and matrons, fathers and old gaffers. It was a strange mixture of solemnity and festivity.

Holy Saturday is always a day for reflection (we went out to Medina and the ancient temples). On Easter Day, we climbed the steps to St Philip's church at the far end, and were able to catch the morning Paschal Mass. As we came out, the procession from Our Lady's Church had arrived, and the square was crammed with people, but this time, there was only one tableau, that of the Risen Christ, arms outstretched in blessing. The men took up their poles again and made their way along the level road in the direction of the Our Lady's Church. Now the singing was joyful, and as we passed under the eaves of the old buildings, people showered us with confetti, like a ticker-tape parade in New York. The bearers had another rest near the pub, and those within came out to pay their respects. Suddenly there was a change in atmosphere. Bearers threw off their constraining albs, and changed into runners, some older ones retired in favour of younger men. They hoisted Jesus into the air, and to the rapturous applause of all, they ran with him, for about fifty metres. And stopped, exhausted. Now they were within sight of their destination and raising the statue again (and with extra men under the poles), ran into the square, the crowd following before and after, cheering and clapping. There were prayers and a blessing, and the Risen Christ was taken into Our Lady of Victory's for another year. I should record that on the

neighbouring peninsula of Vittoriosa, the same run resulted in Jesus breaking his arm.

But here was a true village celebration of Easter, done now as it had been for generations, involving the whole community. Those of us who live in western cities will never experience such events again. In Australia, even where a Good Friday ecumenical procession dares to walk through the streets, they are likely to receive abuse from sleepy citizens. Neighbours complain when church bells are rung. A religious procession here attracts no crowds – with one exception. A few years ago, the Rev. Peter Gador Whyte, then at Wesley Church in the city, commissioned Anna Meszaros (whose work we know at Mark Evangelist), to create bas-relief depictions of the Stations of the Cross. All but one city church placed their station by their footpath. Peter and the other city clergy began to follow the stations on Good Fridays, the accompanying crowds slowly increasing, and this year, I believe, some 2000 people were involved (and the final church – guess which - erected its ‘station’). It has become a major ecumenical event in the life of Melbourne, a little glimpse into the ways that communities once marked Easter – with their bodies.

Community Life at St Mary's
By Marion Poynter

Never a dull moment in our life at St Mary's! Apart from a full worshipping programme there are a number of other community involvements and events taking place within the Parish. In July there was the mid-winter fundraising Cocktail Party. Some fifty or so gathered on a chilly evening in the large hall to partake of a variety of exotic drinks and a great array of home-made savouries. A keen group of young parishioners dispensed the drinks in style from behind four long tables set up in a square in the middle of the room. It was a cheery (but very well behaved!) evening as, suitable attired, we sipped cocktails of many hues - including blue, red and yellow- and raised a generous amount for church funds. Thanks to all who worked hard to make it such a success.

Another enjoyable and productive happening took place on the first Sunday of August following the monthly lunch. This was the Marmalade Making Bee. The Seville oranges were ripe on Marion's tree, so six of us gathered to turn



them into a goodly supply of delicious Seville Orange Marmalade to stock future church stalls. A good time was had by all, and a repeat session is planned.

Gatherings like these provide a small but valuable contribution to our community life.

Introducing Sheila
By Rhondda Fahey

Bobbin Head Road follows a sandstone ridge in North Turramurra, on Sydney's North Shore, then descends steeply through national parkland to a deep arm of the Hawksbury River at Bobbin Head. North Turramurra used to be more like a village, with valleys on either side. Even now with large houses, retirement villages and sports fields, many old-fashioned features remain.

The service station, for instance, is a white painted brick structure, with bowsers out the front, unbranded petrol and driveway service. Near the bowsers, is a large cement kangaroo with a joey in her pouch. The kangaroo's name is Sheila.

Every morning she is dressed for the day and wheeled out

to face the road, bringing smiles of delight to both the diurnal users of the road and the people on their way to and from the dark green waters and picnic places of Bobbin Head. At the moment, in the cold, she and her joey are still wearing the green and gold scarves they put on for the Soccer World Cup. In the summer she wears sunnies.



Being a North Shore lady, she always wears her pearls. For very important occasions, Sheila varies her costume. In the week of the royal wedding earlier this year, she sported a tiara. On the Queen's birthday, she again wore the tiara but carried a handbag. And, of course, both Sheila and the joey wear Santa hats at Christmas. Every time I drive along Bobbin Head Road I look for Sheila in order to see what she's up to. I wonder who exactly it is who dresses her and where that person comes from.

Because, it seems to me, this is not a very modern or grown up or sophisticated thing to do in the twenty first century. This kind of running, simple joke is perhaps not what happens any more in our busy, busy lives. But how good it has been to pause and look out for Sheila. I wonder what else we have lost that might have brought us delight.

An Autistic? Life.

By John Bishop

About five years ago a psychologist diagnosing another family member observed that I also was autistic. There seems little point in a formal diagnosis at my age, hence the question mark in the title. If I had been diagnosed a few years earlier I would have been classified, reputedly like Einstein and Mozart, as having Asperger's Syndrome (c.f. Temple Grandin's book *Different...not less*). High functioning autism is indistinguishable from Asperger's

Syndrome and the revised mental health handbook opted for the former designation.

Autism is a neuro-developmental condition which affects the brain's growth and development. It is a lifelong condition, with symptoms that appear in early childhood (www.amaze.org.au. Amaze is Autism Victoria). The condition is called Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) because autistic people exhibit a wide spectrum of abilities and characteristics. Autistic people see the world differently to "neuro-typical" people and face challenges with communicating and interacting with others because they lack the ability to empathise with others.

One author (Philip Wylie, *The Very Late Diagnosis of Asperger Syndrome (Autism Spectrum Disorder)*, 2014) has suggested moving to another country after diagnosis until one's new persona was established so that any eccentric behaviour was attributed to being a foreigner. He had had quite a large number of jobs and relationships. In contrast, after a false start in teaching, I realised that I HAD to be an applied research scientist. I could not stand repetitive work; I had to do things my way and I wanted to make a difference. I adapted my behaviour depending on the context in which I was operating. Without a clear context, for example in purely social situations, I often flounder. I was shocked by how strongly I wanted to avoid my erstwhile school friends once I left school – I just didn't have the energy to handle both them and my new life. I

was a research scientist for over 30 years. I feel that I have been no more eccentric than expected for a scientist and a pom, although one colleague did observe that I was the most unpredictable person they had ever met. I am sure that I would not have lasted the distance without the companionship and support of my wonderful wife of over 50 years. The Anglican Church has been a continuing support since the age of four.

Nowadays autistic children can be identified by the age of four and can have aides to help them in primary school. In addition to psychological support, occupational therapy (OT) sessions help them develop motor and social skills, learn to de-stress and explore their response to tactile stimuli. They are taught to gauge their stress levels and take time-out if over-stressed.

My schooling started in 1943 at the age of five at an English "Preparatory School" (i.e. a private junior school), which formed part of a "Public School" (i.e. a private secondary school), at which I stayed until going to University in 1956. Early autistic traits I remember were insisting on being tucked very tightly into bed and loathing the feel of my school shirt. I could read and write before I started school but was unable to do "sums" and fell months behind the rest of the class.. The teacher drew rows of bees in the back of my exercise book and I was soon able to tell her, counting from these, that, for example, two honeybees added to three honeybees made five honeybees, but I still

could not say what $3+2$ equalled. My father suggested that I drew dots instead of bees and this finally resolved the problem. There was also a running dispute over my "bird book". We wrote down the names of birds we identified and I insisted that birds, like people, had to have two names. "John, if one blackbird is called Peter, what would another blackbird be called?" (teacher). "That's easy, miss, he would be Paul" (me). "How do you know that?" (Teacher). "Two little blackbirds sat on a wall, one named Peter, the other named Paul....." (me, triumphant).

The boys found that I went completely berserk if I was teased (obviously I didn't gauge my stress level very well!) and fighting me became the lunchtime entertainment. The father of one boy was on the British Boxing Board of Control, so fighting was done according to "Marquis of Queensberry" rules, viz. One-on-one and no hitting below the belt. One day a Mr Mills turned up. He had been a teacher at the school before joining the army and was recuperating from war wounds. He was swathed in bandages like a mummy and on crutches. He yelled at us to stop fighting. There was a brief pause and then action resumed as usual. He then laid about him with his crutches. The crowd thought this was great, seized them and ran round and round him, finally letting go so that he spun off down the path like a top, bandages fluttering and yelling incoherently. He was re-hospitalised and not seen again. I had almost a term's rest when a New Boy arrived.

He was much bigger than any of us, with bright ginger hair and a temper to match. He was a much more exciting opponent than me but he left before the end of his first term. Apparently his parents told the headmaster that they didn't see why they should pay for him to be beaten up at a private school when he could be beaten up for free at a state school.

My parents were made of sterner stuff. My father taught me how to put my weight behind a punch and cover up. He also told me to try to count to ten before losing my temper, giving me time to size up my opponents weak spots. I learned to control my temper until one day, instead of losing it, I burst out laughing and said I wasn't fighting any more, and that was it. When I was about 15, I walked past one of my Prep school teachers. I was in a good mood and, instead of ignoring her in my usual teenage mode, I politely raised my cap, gave her a nice smile and said "Good afternoon, Miss Trimble". She startled me by saying "Oh, John. For years I have been waiting to apologise to you for not stopping the fighting. We felt so sorry for you but we were too scared to leave the staff room".

In 1951 I was away from school for much of the year with peritonitis and other illnesses. I was much quieter and withdrawn after my return, spending a lot of time reading. I formed the habit of dropping into a bookshop and

browsing. One day the owner cornered me and put a proposition to me. I could read any book in the shop provided I was careful with it, was wearing my school uniform and did my reading sitting in a Windsor chair in the bay window at the front of the shop. For several years I became the window display, with brochures displayed on the chair when it was unoccupied.

In my senior years at school I became a cricket umpire and a lance-corporal in the cadet force. Cricket bored me. I was umpiring a game which was so slow-moving that I decided to speed it up by giving a batsman out LBW. Both teams protested the decision so I promised to even things up and when the other team came into bat I gave the batsman out on the first ball. I was shocked when the 18 year old batsman burst into tears. I had given out the best batsman in the school for his first duck ever. I had never dreamt that anyone would take a mere game so seriously. Both teams said they would do better without me. Good, I thought, I will be home by 7.30 and have my homework done by midnight. As I was leaving, fighting broke out between the teams and they hauled me back – they couldn't do without me after all!

Autistic people can use humour to hide social deficiencies. As junior lance-corporal I was given the naughtiest cadets to superintend. I found that getting them to tell their favourite jokes was a good way of avoiding mischief. The

cadet force was 300 strong and run by a teacher who had been a lieutenant-colonel in the regular army and maintained many contacts. Thus it came to pass that the annual "Cert A" exams were being superintended by a Major General and I was superintending a squad of cadets.

The general drove a gorgeous vintage Jaguar with enormous chrome plated headlights, which my squad adjusted to make the car look cross-eyed. Fortunately, I was able to re-adjust them before any one noticed and I kept my ruffians out of any other mischief but we were running out of jokes and stories by the time they were waiting to show their prowess with the Bren gun. I had just filled in time by describing the unofficial "4th IA" (Urinating on the gun barrel to cool it) when the general strolled up, pointed his stick at a cadet and ordered him to demonstrate the "3rd IA". The flustered lad jumped to his feet, undid his trousers and started to urinate on the gun. The general's cry of outrage caused the lad to swing round while still urinating and water the general's highly polished shoes.....Such is Life.

A Church for People who Think

A Reflection upon Stability

By Fr Philip Bewley

As many of you will know, earlier this year it was my turn to do a series of talks at St Mary's for our regular series of after-church seminars called 'A Church for People who Think.' I chose to do a series of addresses on great Spiritual Writers of the 20th century. I spoke on Thomas Merton, Henri Nouwen, and then that great pioneer of Benedictine Spirituality for everyday life, namely Esther de Waal. Researching my talk turned out to be an enjoyable exercise, revisiting someone who had inspired me when I was a young man in my 20s, particularly through her book, 'Seeking God: The Way of St Benedict,' published in 1984. From memory I felt drawn to read this book after a visit to Tarrawarra Abbey, and for the first time in my life witnessing monks in choir chanting their daily office. Through this experience, and somehow moved by the Spirit, I wanted to find out more.

Esther was the product of a clerical home, her father being an Anglican priest, and later she found herself married to one too, a Dutchman, Victor de Waal, who later became Dean of Canterbury Cathedral. It was during her time as 'mistress of the Deanery' that she came into contact with the Rule of St Benedict, inspired to do so by the Abbey

ruins which were literally in her back garden. She writes in *Seeking God*: 'Sometimes one finds a place, a landscape, which is new and yet the forms, the shapes, the shadows seem already familiar. So it was for me with the Rule. It was neither remote nor past nor cerebral, but immediate and relevant, speaking of things that I already half knew or was struggling to make sense of.'

Preparing for my parish talk, and having not read Esther's book for some years, I set about reading it again; its now yellowing pages revealing to me afresh the beauty and the simplicity of Benedict's Rule. In my talk I spoke about the Rule and the three monastic vows of stability, conversation morum, and obedience, but it was Esther's chapter on 'Stability' which interested me most.

Since leaving home at the age of 21, I have lived in around 15 different homes. Now that I'm 54, that equates to moving house on average about every 3 years. You might say there is not much stability in that! However, it made me think, what is stability for me? And Esther had the answer. She talks about having an 'inner stability,' a 'stability of the heart.' For her stability is about having an 'internal unity and coherence.' Stability, as she describes it, is not a geographical space, as for most of us that is unobtainable, but as Cistercian Associates we can certainly speak of stability in terms described by Esther: an 'internal space, that we can carry around, something attainable,

though not necessarily without considerable hard work and perseverance.'

She goes on to mention Metropolitan Anthony Bloom, an Orthodox monk himself, and how he viewed stability in his own life. Quoting Bloom she further writes: 'The fact of being limited by a line drawn on the ground, as he put it, does not in itself make one stable. Instead 'we discovered that at the heart of stability there is the certitude that God is everywhere, that we have no need to seek God elsewhere, that if I can't find God here I shan't find Him anywhere, because the kingdom of God begins with us. Consequently the first thing about stability is the certitude that I stand before God wholly, immobile so to speak – the place hardly matters.'

I was very grateful to find an excuse to once again to plumb the depths of Esther's book. Not that I needed an excuse, but reading my old copy of 'Seeking God' was like meeting an old friend again. For me, the vow of stability provides the anchor I need, gives me a sense of groundedness, is an inner space, an inner sense of being I carry around with me. It creates a sense of quietude and inner peace in my life, a place where I feel at one with God, and it provides the means for me to persevere when things are not quite as I would like them to be.

Luke quoting Paul quoting Jesus

By Geoff Jenkins

(A reflection on the Wisdom of Jesus study series)

In Acts 20, the author (we will call him Luke) provides us with an account of a farewell sermon to the "elders of the congregation" of the Church in Ephesus. Luke tells us that these had been summoned to meet Paul at Assos.

A little context within theological studies might help here, before we draw out one item of particular significance.

Two issues are of importance. The first is that there is a general consensus, or there should be, that the second half of Acts, especially the "we" passages such as the one we are reading here (see eg v.13), is based directly on an eye-witness account. If so I think it is Luke's eyes bearing witness here! The second point of context is the rather fierce recent debate that has gone on about whether the Paul we meet in Acts is the same person we encounter in the Pauline Epistles. This debate relates for example to whether the Paul of Acts who has taken a vow can be squared with the Paul who wrote Galatians. More on this aspect shortly:

Our passage is replete with eye-witness features. Just consider versus 13-18. Almost none of this detail is important as context. Apparently the writer knows nothing about Paul's journey by road, or chooses not to tell us. But is difficult to imagine that the writer has introduced this

detail of the itinerary unless he (or she), having been on board the ship, knew it to be the case. It happened to be just what had occurred.

Not only so, but the Paul we encounter here is something of a softy. We should bear in mind that he spent a long time in Ephesus, according to Acts, and so he knew members of that Church well. But one derives the impression that Paul might have been a somewhat more amiable character to meet than to receive a letter from. I am reminded of the modern social media phenomenon, where people (trolls we call them) might write something they would never (we hope) say to a person's face.

There is so much detail in the speech of Paul that deserves attention than we can deal with here, so I want to focus on vv 32-35. Here we find something rather remarkable, namely that Paul quotes Jesus. "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

This is remarkable in several respects. Firstly, in the Epistles Paul seems almost to go out of his way not to cite the words of Jesus. With a few exceptions, such as I Corinthians 11, he seems not to be interested in the teaching of Jesus, reserving almost exclusive interest for the person of Christ. But I think this might be a mis-reading of Paul, if a common one.

Even more remarkable is the Acts quotation itself, for as far as we know from the Gospels (both canonical and apocryphal) Jesus did not say this. Not only so, but it seems to have been commonly said in the Judaism of the time, so it is likely that Paul thought it and could almost have said it himself without citation. Just possibly it is for Paul a summation of Jesus' teaching, but if so Jesus' teaching for Paul was not very distinctive, and he does not sound ("the words") like he is summarizing.

So what does this mean for us? Firstly, Acts can provide us with a different perspective on the early church, which we might use to enrich our understanding. Luke's narrative and the theological argument of the epistles should be read as complementary, as serving to contextualise each other, rather than to disagree on details. Acts can provide us with a bigger picture and a broader perspective.

More importantly perhaps, Paul, according to Luke, was inclined to cite the words of Jesus. This may be an almost unique reference, but I suspect it is the tip of an iceberg. Likely as not Paul did this very often, and Acts 20 is then typical of his practice.

I think this is a practice we should follow. We are privileged to have collections of the teaching of Jesus that in all likelihood Paul did not have, though Luke of course did! But sometimes it seems that we may prefer to base our

sermons on the Gospels read through the lens of the Pauline Epistles, and certainly our hymnal does this even if it is a pitfall we successfully avoid.

And let the Lord Jesus have the last word:

"It is more blessed to give than to receive".

St Mary's Travels

Travel tales

by Greg Reinhardt

In March/April I travelled to France for 10 days to the South West and to Paris.

I spent a day in Albi which is the administrative capital of the Tarn and the city where Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec



and La Pèrouse were born. There is an excellent museum devoted to Toulouse-Lautrec in the centre of Albi which contains a number of works given to the city by his mother, Adèle la Comtesse de Toulouse-

Lautrec Monfa. The museum has spectacular views over the Tarn and is situated in the former Bishop's palace with its wonderful parterre garden with hedges in the shape of fleur de lys. Albi is worth a visit if only to see the garden. The Toulouse-Lautrec museum is overshadowed by the Cathedral dedicated to Saint Cecilia which was built over 200 years commencing in 1282 initially as a fortress, subsequent to the Albigensian crusade. Pope Innocent III initiated the crusade against the Cathars (Albigensians) in about 1165. The Cathars were a non-Trinitarian sect

established in the south west of France. They were eventually defeated by royal and papal forces at Montségur in 1243 after a siege which resulted in the deaths of many. It is said that the leader of the royalist and papal forces was asked who should be killed to which the response was to kill them all and that God would know who should be spared! The Cathars lived on in diminished force for some years and construction of the Cathedral Church at Albi was a statement by the Church that it should not be challenged again. The fresco of the Last Judgement below the organ painted by Flemish artists is well worth seeing.

I also visited the La Pèrouse museum which is on the other side of the Tarn. La Pèrouse, of course, met Captain Phillip and the First Fleet at Botany Bay in January/February 1788. He was on a voyage of exploration for Louis XVI. The two ships of La Pèrouse expedition was subsequently wrecked off the New Hebrides (now Vanuatu) but the wrecks were not discovered until 1828. With the French Revolution and the Napoleonic era, the British were blamed by the French for the loss of the expedition. There is an excellent statue of the Admiral in the centre of Albi.

On to Paris for opera. I saw Berlioz' *Benvenuto Cellini* at the Bastille, which I doubt will ever be seen in Australia as it is very difficult to stage (a central part of the opera is the casting of the statue of Perseus by Cellini under papal commission)-truly magnificent. It was not accepted in Paris when it was originally staged in 1835, but only after a

revival and reworking by Franz Liszt at a performance in Weimar in 1851. I also saw *Le Domino Noir* by Auber at the Opéra Comique. I had never been to the Opéra Comique before. It is a magnificent theatre and a bit over the top. Well worth a visit. I also was fortunate to see the Delacroix exhibition at the Louvre.

In June/July I took a cruise from Southampton to Oporto, Barcelona, Ajaccio in Corsica, Rome, Cagliari in Sardinia and Gibraltar. Oporto is a simply lovely city in the north of Portugal and I had a chance to try the white port and other wine from the Douro region. The highlight in Corsica was the visit to the house where Napoléon was born which was given to the French State by Napoléon III and the Empress Eugénie. I also visited the Cathedral and saw the font in which the future Emperor was baptized. Napoléon left Corsica at a young age to be educated in mainland France. It is interesting to note that the man who was to promote French (the language then spoken mainly in Paris and the Ile de France) as the universal language for France spoke only dialect at that time (a sort of Genoese spoken in Corsica—indeed the Bonaparte family were originally from Genoa). More generally, it is worth noting that until the First World War the first language of most French was dialect: I need to visit the place of the Emperor's death – St Helena. It's on my bucket list!

Gibraltar is also an interesting place to visit. The British on the ship insisted on waving union jacks and Singing “Rule Britannia” and “Land of Hope and Glory” as the ship left Gibraltar Harbour. Gibraltar remains a sore point with the Spanish having been ceded to Britain at the end of the War of the Spanish Succession. Another problem to solve in the context of Brexit!



I spent time in France- in the Tarn and in Paris. I took a day trip to Lourdes to visit the grotto and collect some water from the spring where Saint Bernadette saw the vision of Our Lady. It’s described by Roman Catholic friends as Catholic Disneyland! I remarked how the queue at the Grotto dissipated at 1245. The French would not let religion stand in front of lunch!

Lastly a day in Toulouse. Visits to St Sernin, the largest Romanesque Church in Europe, and to the Church of the Jacobins (now deconsecrated) are well worth a visit, as well as opera at the Capitole (Mozart’s *La Clemenza de Titus*).

I saw *Don Paquale* at the Palais Garnier in Paris. Another visit to Amiens and the battlefields of the First World War.

I had a chance to have a good look around the Cathedral. I was particularly taken by L'Ange Pleureur (the Crying Angel) sculpted by Nicolas Blasset in the 17th century and which is found behind the High Altar. The statue has particular significance for Australians, as it was usual to send post cards of the Angel home before heading off to the front. Particularly poignant when you consider the subject matter. I was also lucky to hear an impromptu choir of British choristers convened to commemorate one of the WW I battles, the Battle of Hamel on 4 July (this is the year of the Battles for Amiens) singing that haunting hymn "Be Still My Soul" and a Scottish piper singing a lament. It was all very moving indeed. I was not aware that the Bishop of Amiens had approached the Pope to negotiate a truce with the Germans to save Amiens and that the Pope had approached the Kaiser and the German Government through the Papal Nuncio in Munich. There was a proposal from the Germans but the French refused to deal.

I did not have an opportunity to go to the new Monash Centre at Villers-Bretonneux. Next time.

Occasional Series – Favourite Prayers

Prayer of an Ageing Person

Lord, you know better than I know myself that I am growing older, and will some day be old. Keep me from

getting talkative, and particular from the fatal habit of thinking that I must say something on every subject and on every occasion.

Release me from craving to straighten out everybody's affairs. Make me thoughtful but not moody, helpful but not bossy. With my vast store of wisdom it seems a pity not to use it all, but you know, Lord, that I want a few friends at the end. Keep my mind from the recital of endless details – give me wings to come to the point.

I ask for grace enough to listen to the tales of others' pains. But seal my lips on my own aches and pains – they are increasing, and my love of rehearsing them is becoming sweeter as the years go by. Help me to endure them with patience.

I dare not ask for improved memory, but for a growing humility and a lessening cocksureness when my memory seems to clash with the memories of others. Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally it is possible that I may be mistaken.

Keep me reasonably sweet. I do not want to be a saint – some of them are so hard to live with – but a sour old person is one of the crowning works of the devil.

Give me the ability to see good things in unexpected places, and talents in unexpected people. And give me,

O Lord, the grace to tell them so.

O Lord, Support Us

Used by John Henry Newman but probably of sixteenth-century origin

O Lord, support us all the day long, until the shadows lengthen and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over, and our work is done. Then Lord, in your mercy grant us a safe lodging and a holy rest, and peace at the last; through Jesus Christ our Lord

A Church for People who Think

Sundays @ 11.30am

Following the post-service morning tea each Sunday, St Mary's now offers a weekly education programme. All are welcome.

On the first Sunday of each month:

Congregational lunch at 12.15pm, sometimes with a pre-lunch talk

On other Sundays of each month:

Lecture/study groups from c.11.30am-12.15pm

August to December

August

12 & 26 – The Three-fold order of ministry (Fr Craig)

19 – Mary in the Anglican Tradition (Fr Philip)

September – The Letter of James (Fr Craig)

October – St Mary's Researchers (Various speakers)

November & December – What Anglicans Believe (Fr Philip & Fr Craig)

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Theological Students:

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Jack Lindsay

Director of Music:

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Parish Administrator &

Child Safe Officer	Kerry Dehring
Regular Office Hours:	Monday 9.30am-3.30pm
	Wednesday 9.30am-3.30pm
	Thursday 9.30am-3.30pm

The church is open during the day.
Morning Prayer is at 8.30am Tuesday to Friday.
All are welcome, and for coffee afterwards.
Wednesday Eucharist is celebrated at
12.30pm in the Mary Chapel.

The clergy are happy to be contacted to discuss matters of faith with anyone, and to prepare people for the church's sacraments.
Any views and opinions expressed in this edition of the parish news are those of the individuals writing them and do not necessarily reflect parish policy or the views of the parish clergy.

This Edition of the Parish News has been printed in black & white to help save money. If you would like to view this edition of the Parish News in colour, please go to our website
www.stmarys.org.au

MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT

St Mary's Anglican Church, North Melbourne is an inner-city Christian community that strives to be faithful, inclusive and sacramental.

God inspires us to worship in daily celebration; to be caring, thoughtful and inviting.

In response to God's call, in the next three to five years we aim:

- *To grow substantially in faith and numbers*
- *To create an inter-generational culture that values all age groups - children and adults - equally*
- *To express our faith in active engagement within and beyond our own community*
- *To deploy our property and financial assets in strategic support of the ministry needs of the parish for the long term*
- *To become more open to change as we learn to grow*

