

*St Mary's*



# *AVE*

*Pentecost 2023*



*Descent of Holy Spirit on the Apostles  
Location: St. Cyril's Monastery, Kyiv, Ukraine*

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Ave is available for download via the St Mary's Parish Website: [Pentecost Ave 2023](#)

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction .....	4
A Spirit of Innovation.....	5
An Indigenous Voice in Federal Parliament .....	7
St Mary's Energy Audit.....	9
The Angelus Bell .....	11
Time in an Inner-city Garden During the Pandemic .....	13
Memories of Sunday School Days .....	16
Church Experiences in New Guinea.....	18
Close to Home .....	21

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We meet on the traditional lands of the Wurundjeri people of the great Kulin nation.  
We acknowledge their leaders past present and emerging and offer them our respects.

*Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors. They do not purport to reflect the opinions or views of the parish of St Marys, the Anglican Church, or its members.*

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## Introduction

AVE is an occasional journal of St Mary's Anglican Church, North Melbourne. It is produced a few times a year, and provides a vehicle for parishioners, and others who are close to us, to write in a manner both informative and entertaining on a variety of topics which sustain us. AVE takes its name from the Ave Maria salutation addressed to our patron Saint Mary. This particular edition comes out around the feast of Pentecost.

Our Mission and Vision Statement says in part that *St Mary's Anglican Church, North Melbourne is an inner-city Christian community that strives to be faithful, inclusive, and sacramental. As part of that, it is stated that in striving to be inclusive we seek to break down barriers of exclusion that have marred the Church's history, including exclusion based on race, gender, sexuality, age or disability*

In this edition of AVE, some articles discuss issues of inclusivity, drawing our attention to how the parish might respond, and is responding, to social challenges such as those of disability, of the acknowledgement of the indigenous guardians of the land, and of climate change – all issues to which we give serious attention.

Incidentally we also note our participation in this year's Palm Sunday March through Melbourne. There were at least ten St Mary's people marching, making us probably the largest contingent from any Anglican church. We marched with the Anglican banner, and we also had a new St Mary's Justice for Refugees banner (bought for \$50 which wardens consider to be a bargain at that price).



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## **A Spirit of Innovation**

*Josephine Snowdon*  
*Anglican Diocese of Melbourne SRC*

The International Day of Disabled Persons (IDDP) was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in 1992. This day is celebrated globally every December 3rd. In Australia, IDDP aims to recognise the contributions and achievements of 4.4 Million people whose disabilities may be visible or unseen. In 2022 the theme launched was "Transformative Solutions for Inclusive Development: the role of innovation fuelling an Accessible and equitable world.

As Christians we live, called to look at social equity and social justice matters affecting people with a disability. We are right to support the UN movement for International Human Rights, <https://www.ihrhq.org/> on the matter of equity needs of people with disabilities. Think, might there are implications for our Parish Life, (Worship and social events).

A willingness to embrace innovation might be significant for Christian communities, while tolerating exclusion is not a Christ-like mindset. In Matthew 19:14, the vulnerable ones, the children, are invited to come to Jesus. The disciples are asked not to put barriers in a person's way of building a strong relationship with God: In terms of Parish life this, means barriers to church attendance in a community of friendship.

Now just in case you have decided to tune out at this time, thinking this seems something that is not directly relevant to yourself, just consider that we are all aging and that our parishioners will be more often experiencing disabilities such as reduced mobility, sensory abilities, such as hearing and sight, memory, and social and economic mobility. International Day of Older Persons is celebrated on October 1st. Let us not underestimate the fount of knowledge and experience that our elders can offer younger people and visa versa what younger people can offer them.

Let us now talk statistics: 16.6% of Australians have a disability seen or unseen. For a parish anticipating 100 attendees per week, they might consider that 16 of these people might currently be having difficulties accessing our facilities. This might impact future attendance at our services and social events.

Experiences of significant challenges by people with disability to attend services and events could lead to negative social income for parishes, as it might affect community attitudes and knowledge about a location. One negative experience might also lead to a person giving up attendance and to a poorer spiritual and social experience if they are reduced to online access only.

Christians of all people need to be on the front foot in this area of equity and justice. At the

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time of Pentecost we anticipate a renewal of our faith, minds, and hearts: may we have a renewal of care and concern for the "other," the one whose difficulties we are not observing are taking less than adequate care for in our parishes

At this time of Pentecost let us promote friendliness toward seen and unseen disability in people of all ages. Checking in with new people attending Church and those routinely attending, by simply asking if they are experiencing any barriers to attendance shows actual interest and concern for their spiritual well-being.

Let us decide to consider our habits and needs less important than others less fortunate, becoming true friends to others on account of disability and increased aging. It might only be small adjustments that are needed, but not considering what we can do suggests a very barren spirituality within parish life and a lack of true friendliness.

Perhaps your parish might decide to launch a special service or event within your local community for both of these days- International Day of Older Persons and International Day of Disability.

My challenge to all Anglican parishes is to consider doing something for each of these important internationally recognised days. Importantly don't forget to have a coordinator for your event. This person could be a young adult looking for a challenge in justice and equity. Your event coordinator can link into the local municipality to check out the already planned activities in the local communities.

Checking in with your local municipality might bring your effort to the notice of a wider community and therefore increase the outreach that can be achieved. Quite often badges, stickers etc are already available, and specific events planned that one can join in with or plan parallel to. Remember, there is usually a designated theme to follow for such day each year.

Other simple things could be undertaken such as-

A review of your access- what else can be done to improve it?

Thinking about how your service presentation might be unwittingly excluding those with sensory problems ( vision or hearing loss).

A designated service for these days .

Holding a community outreach event; for example a lunch or bingo session a talk on a topic of interest.

Offering lifts to attend in taxis or cars or buses to a targeted audience for your IDDP and IFOP Service and or social event .

Your Children's ministry group or choir visiting a local aged care facility or disability facility to sing or play music.

Think big and open your hearts! Peace be with you.

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## **An Indigenous Voice in Federal Parliament**

*Christine Storey*

Some of the issues surrounding establishing an indigenous Voice to Parliament involve racism.

Examples of Australian Federal Government enshrined racism include “The White Australia Policy” which was established at Federation in 1901, and only renounced by the then Prime Minister Gough Whitlam in 1973 (for many of us within our own lifetimes) and also Australian aborigines and Torres Strait islanders not having the right to vote until 1962, (although pre-Federation colonies excluding Queensland and Western Australia, gave Aboriginal men the vote at the same time as the non indigenous population, yet only indigenous women living in South Australia were given voting rights after 1895).

My memories as a child growing up in Melbourne in the 1960’s are how very white the population was. The only aborigines I saw were during our school holidays in Echuca and although nothing was said, they were clearly “fringe dwellers” and seemed to keep to themselves. Little wonder, as I heard only this year that pregnant aboriginal women were not able to be admitted to the Echuca Hospital until the years following the second world war, and instead were delivered of their babies on the hospital’s verandah – just one specific example of their exclusion in this town during those years.

Then there is the more personal exclusion - it has only been in recent years that I have become aware that one of my dearest friends from my university years has an aboriginal heritage, her family coming from a Victorian town on the Murray. After years of being told by her family to be silent about her aboriginal heritage because of their shame about being aboriginal, she is now proud and confident to speak about her aboriginal heritage. My grief is that she had the burden of all those years of shame. She now speaks of her mother remembering being taunted by white children when she’d walk to school with her brothers and sisters, as they chanted “Nigger, nigger, pull the trigger” – no one stopped the children calling out these wicked taunts.

For those of us educated in Australian schools in the 1950s-1970s, most of us would have hardly heard a mention of indigenous history during our school days, although we were aware of the Tasmanian aboriginal massacres. Rather, if Australian history were taught at all (as history taught in schools mainly focussed on post 1066 British history at that time) it mainly focussed on “intrepid European explorers” and “successful pastoralists” such as John Macarthur, recognised as the pioneer of the Australian Merino wool industry (although more about sheep and our aboriginal brothers and sisters to follow).

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Late last year an indigenous film director Rachel Perkins (daughter of the famous Australian indigenous leader Charlie Perkins) made a 3 - part documentary entitled “The Australian Wars”, which documented indigenous massacres/wars throughout Australia continuing in some states until the early part of the 20th century; this was shown on SBS television. For those of you who did not see the series, it was compelling and confronting viewing, leaving one incredulous how such a national history could be essentially “swept under the carpet”.

The Eumeralla massacres, portrayed briefly in this documentary, for example occurred in south western Victoria from the 1830s to 1880s, during which time around 6,500 aboriginal people and 80 settlers were killed essentially because the aboriginal people were hunter gatherers and did not consider killing sheep any different from their 60,000 year tradition of killing kangaroos, wallabies and other native animals for their food and fur. Indigenous opera singer and composer Deborah Cheetham has memorialised this horrific, yet almost forgotten historical event in her “Eumeralla: A War Requiem for Peace”, in which she draws a confronting parallel between Christ as humanity’s sacrificial lamb and the aborigines “sacrificed” to save the settler’s sheep (to be performed with the MSO on Saturday 14th October 7:30pm at Hamer Hall – not to be missed!).

As we as relative newcomers to Australia have ignored, ostracised, injured or otherwise mistreated our First Nations peoples, many of us do feel guilt, which in itself is diminishing to us as people. Yet as Christians we believe that our guilt leads us to repentance of our sins, God’s forgiveness, and reconciliation, bringing peace to all concerned.

My personal reading of the “Uluru Statement of the Heart” and the establishment of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice to Federal Parliament, is that it gives us the opportunity to listen respectfully to the Voice of those who have been silenced on their own lands for so many generations, so that as a Nation we can be reconciled one with each other and move forward in strength together. Recently South Australians have voted for an Indigenous Voice in their State Parliament following Victoria’s lead as our state’s work on “Treaty” continues.

As we consider our vote in this upcoming referendum, may we reflect on 1 John 4:18 “Perfect love casts out fear”– may all Australians indigenous and non indigenous cease to fear the different and lovingly embrace diversity, by treasuring and enshrining our ancient indigenous heritage.

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## **St Mary's Energy Audit**

### *Climate Action Group*

The St Mary's Climate Action Group has been investigating the parish's energy use as a means for better understanding our carbon footprint and consequent contribution to the problems arising from climate change. It is a work in progress but we are finding the initial results to be both useful and encouraging.

#### **How are we going about it?**

We have been following a "Simple Church Building Energy Audit", developed by the 5 Leaf Eco-Awards ecumenical environmental change program. This audit process reviews energy use across church buildings, drawing together information from energy bills, individual appliances and patterns of use.

#### **What have we done so far?**

- Sourced the available historical energy bills for the parish and collated the relevant data within a digital spreadsheet
- Computed totals for calendar year 2022 (for church, hall and vicarage)
- Investigated patterns of use for the heating and cooling systems

#### **What are we finding?**

- Drawing together relevant information allows us to identify areas for improvement and also provides a baseline for future comparisons
- The audit results provide useful data for parish decision making. For example, they help to quantify the value of the parish's decision to move to a carbon-negative energy supplier, Diamond Energy, indicating a potential reduction of our energy use carbon footprint of around 40% (see the table below)
- The significant work done to produce the digital spreadsheet provides a good foundation for future updates and analysis

St Mary's Energy Use in 2022							
Site	Gas (MJ)	Gas CO2 equivalent (tonnes)	Electricity (kWh)	Electricity CO2 equivalent (tonnes)	Total CO2 equivalent (tonnes)	Equivalent car travel (km)	Equivalent air travel (km)
Total	228132	15.74	10705	11.45	27.19	185605	302.12
<b><u>CO2 equivalent tonnes conversion</u></b>							
Gas @ 0.000069 tonnes per MJ (Source: <a href="https://apps.epa.vic.gov.au/AGC/r_cc_causes.html#page-3/">https://apps.epa.vic.gov.au/AGC/r_cc_causes.html#page-3/</a> )							
Electricity via: <a href="https://www.powershop.com.au/carbon-calculator/">https://www.powershop.com.au/carbon-calculator/</a> (uses government figures for the local electricity generation mix)							
<b><u>Equivalent car travel km conversion</u></b>							
<a href="https://www.ntc.gov.au/light-vehicle-emissions-intensity-australia#:~:text=Average%20emissions%20intensity%20in%202021&amp;text=Average%20emissions%20intensity%20for%20passenger,vehicles%20was%2012.5%20g%2Fkm.">https://www.ntc.gov.au/light-vehicle-emissions-intensity-australia#:~:text=Average%20emissions%20intensity%20in%202021&amp;text=Average%20emissions%20intensity%20for%20passenger,vehicles%20was%2012.5%20g%2Fkm.</a>							
<b><u>Equivalent air travel km conversion</u></b>							
<a href="https://www.carbonindependent.org/22.html#:~:text=CO2%20emissions%20from%20aviation%20fuel,CO2%20per%20passenger%20per%20hour.">https://www.carbonindependent.org/22.html#:~:text=CO2%20emissions%20from%20aviation%20fuel,CO2%20per%20passenger%20per%20hour.</a>							

The table above shows total energy use across the church, hall and vicarage for the 2022 calendar year. The total megajoules (MJ) used for gas, and kilowatt hours (kWh) for electricity, are converted to the equivalent tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions. This gives a total annual energy use carbon footprint of 27.19 tonnes of CO2.

By changing our electricity provider to Diamond Energy – a carbon negative electricity provider – we effectively offset the carbon footprint of our future electricity usage. This has the potential to reduce our carbon footprint by 11.45 tonnes of CO2, or around 40% of our usage based on the totals for 2022, above.

To provide a more familiar context to these figures the parish total CO2 emissions have also been converted to the equivalent emissions from car travel (single small vehicle) and air travel (single commercial passenger). The large car travel kilometres value seems to indicate that our carbon footprint is significant. The much smaller value for air travel kilometres indicates that air travel is a very carbon emission intensive mode of transport.

At Pentecost we mark the coming of the Holy Spirit, the *Paracletos* - the one who comes to our side as Helper, Comforter, Counsellor, Advocate. We trust that the Holy Spirit prays in us and for us all as we move through our days, helping us to care for God's Creation in our individual actions and our shared life at St Mary's, the Diocese of Melbourne and beyond.

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## The Angelus Bell

*Robert Gribben in consultation with Susan Gribben.*

I was recently sitting in the sun enjoying the company of our congregation when the bell in our little frame began to ring. Not twelve bells for midday, but the Angelus bell, three sets of three bells, a pause, then nine bells sounded in succession. The monasteries of the Middle Ages sounded out this call at 6, 12 and 6 every day. The ploughman in the field and the old woman with her chickens would pause and say the words which have been handed down. It became very much a prayer for lay people.

With prayer assisted by technology, our bell is programmed for 8.30, 12.00pm and 6.00pm on weekdays, 8.00am, 12.00pm and 6.00pm on Sundays, and 12.00pm and 6.00pm on Saturdays (omitting the morning bell by popular demand of locals!)

I first heard them on a 'retreat', a few weeks after I had arrived at Queen's College for my studies at the university. The Methodist Church Worship Society regularly met over a weekend at the Sisters of the Holy Name Retreat House in Cheltenham, and I had been invited and I went.

I confess that the call at 6 a.m. did not bring me leaping out of bed – the eucharist was at a later hour; but 12 and 6 pm often came in the breaks before lunch and dinner. We would be somewhere around the convent, by ourselves or having conversation. At the first bell, we learned, one fell silent. I did not then know the words, but I learned to love silence.



*Jean-François Millet, ca 1859. The painting depicts two peasants in a field bowing over a basket of potatoes to say a prayer, the Angelus; with the ringing of the bell from the church on the horizon, it marked the end of a day's work.*

Later I learned the three verses of scripture which are said as the sets of three bells sound:

℣. The Angel of the LORD declared unto Mary,  
℞. And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.

℣. Behold the handmaid of the LORD.  
℞. Be it done unto me according to thy word.

℣. And the Word was made flesh.  
℞. And dwelt among us.

The first words give it its name, '*Angelus*'.

The responses (℞.) were there if you were in a group or in chapel, otherwise you completed the verses yourself - and full of good gospel meat for contemplation they are. Advanced Methodists then said, after the verse, the *Hail Mary*. It is a beautiful biblical prayer. Some stopped at the end of the biblical quotation; others went on with the petition to the Mother of God to pray for us at our death.

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Here it is, if you don't already know it:

Hail Mary, full of grace; the LORD is with thee: blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the Fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death.

The appropriateness of such a prayer has been vigorously debated among Anglicans for many years, since much of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century Reformation was opposed to asking the intercession of the saints. It remains true, in any case, that any disciple of Jesus may put a petition directly to him (so Heb.4:14-14, Ephes. 2: 11-12). A Baptist friend replaces 'pray for us' with '...stand with us sinners now...'.

Then, during the nine bells, there is a lovely Collect to pray:

We beseech Thee, O LORD, pour Thy grace into our hearts; that as we have known the Incarnation of Thy Son, Jesus Christ, by the message of an angel, so by His Cross ☩ and Passion we may be brought unto the glory of His Resurrection, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(☩) is where you may sign yourself with the Cross. And, of course, you may update it all to modern English.

In some places, the *Gloria Patri* is added, either once or thrice.

℣. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

℟. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end.  
Amen.

St Mary's tower and spire were never built. The earliest bell probably came from St Mary's School, but at least one parishioner thought it inadequate for its task of summoning North Melbourne to prayer. Even then, a stone tower was beyond financial reach – but a bell, hanging in its steel frame, rose up in its place. It was the dream of John Harvey Foster (1944-94) and several others, but John's plan for a bell was stopped by his death, an early victim of AIDS. He had chosen its highly appropriate name: *Magnificat*. Fellow parishioners and friends, who had loved him, raised the money for the bell and its housing (a stone tower still beyond our reach). The bell was blessed by Bishop Andrew St John from a cherry picker, with Robert preaching, and Katie Homes leading the prayers of a crowd of family, colleagues at the History Department, and friends, on 15 June 1997.

John was my first real university friend, and our personal faith grew up in that atmosphere. John decided to be confirmed as an Anglican and that happened to fall on the feast of 'St John *ante portam Latinum*' (a Roman feast) on 6 May, and it was on that day in 1994 he died.

John lived in one of St Mary's flats for many years, was a most regular attender at its services and contributed in many ways to the life of the parish and to the beauty of its interior,

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including the donation of the two great candelabra which stand in our sanctuary and our tall Paschal candle stand.

So much for the history and the custom. This little pause in the day is a profound moment for Christians to remember the Incarnation, beginning with the Annunciation then and Mary's acceptance of the call of God, and finally those tremendous words 'the Word become flesh [and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth]'. Anglican theology especially, from the 17<sup>th</sup> C, has been built on this, though in no way diminishing the centrality of Christ's Cross and Resurrection.

Further reading:

'Magnificat', an address at the blessing of a bell, 15th June 1997, in *Bell and Book, in Memoriam John Harvey Foster*, Greg Denning, Robert Gribben & Katie Holmes, St Mary's Anglican Church, North Melbourne and the History Department, University of Melbourne, 1997.

John Foster, *Take me to Paris, Johnny*, MUP 1993, the moving story of his partner Juan's final days which coincided with Holy Week at St Mary's.

John Rickard, *An Assemblage of Decent Men and Women, A History of the Anglican Parish of St Mary's North Melbourne*, 2008, esp pp 134f, 165 fn 25.



### **Time in an Inner-city Garden During the Pandemic**

*Marion Poynter*

Just before we married in late 1984, John and I went looking to buy a house to make our home together. North Melbourne, where we chose to look (close to the city and the University), was at the time relatively inexpensive, compared with other inner suburbs. After weeks of searching we came across a Real Estate notice in front of a single storey, double fronted building, among a row of period houses on a hill in a wide street:

*'For sale. Inner city Victorian cottage on farm-sized allotment.'*

Intrigued, we peered over the side fence to find a surprisingly spacious productive back-yard; in fact it was a little farm. The migrant Italian family who were selling the place had a large plot of ripening tomatoes, from which to make their year's supply of passata. There were also several heavily laden grape vines, enough to produce their annual wine supply, as well as several fruit trees, a range of herbs, and a few vegetables for their daily needs.

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I've always loved country life, gardening, cooking and in particular growing my own food, so the prospect of being able to do this on our own land, while living in the inner city, was exciting. John, though not a hands-on gardener, was of country town origin, and happy with the whole idea. It was irresistible. We bought it in early 1983 and over the next forty years have transformed the large allotment into our own style of productive 'farm'. It's now a lush oasis, filled with flowers, well-established trees (most of them fruit-bearing), a generous vegie patch, a pen of bantam chooks, and a bee hive.

When the Covid crisis hit us all in early 2019, we were largely confined to home for months on end. Somehow, we didn't mind. We had online shopping, and deliveries from family and friends to their at-risk elderly! We came to realise that ours was a great place in which to be imprisoned. We enjoyed reading, watching television and frequent Scrabble contests.

But it was the garden that was our particular joy. It became the centre of our universe. We observed, as never before, its daily changes at close hand, as one season rolled into the next. We sowed seeds, and planted vegetables, trees and flowers, tending them and watching them grow, and harvesting them and their ripening fruits. I threw myself into cooking and preserving our produce, arranging flowers for our house, and making posies for friends. All very fulfilling!

Then, there was the writing. For years I've kept a garden journal, and taken innumerable photos. I guess I've always had in mind writing the story of how we went about making this garden, and what influences made it what it has become. It is a storehouse of lifetime memories, and has become central to our way of life. But, somehow, I never managed to find time to fit the writing about it into our busy lives. The perfect time came when the Covid confinement started.

Over the next three years I worked on my garden-based memoir. I wanted to show off our wonderful inner-city garden, and describe how rewarding the whole experience has been. It is an intimate, personal story, telling what it means to us, how it has given back all that we have put into it, and more. One chapter is entitled God in the Garden. Hopefully it will inspire other city gardeners to make the most of their precious piece of land.

The book will be called "In My Own Backyard, The Bountiful Harvest of An Inner City Garden." Published by Australian Scholarly Publishing, it will be out soon, and available direct from them, or at North Melbourne Books.

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## Pictures from Marion Poynter's Garden



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**Memories of Sunday School Days**  
**In a Small Country Town in the Wheatbelt of WA**  
*Winsome Roberts*

It was Mother who insisted on Sunday School: and most Sundays she would drive we children from the farm along the dusty roads, along the highway to the small country township with the single, Methodist, church and its tiny hall.

How I loved this. An isolated child, eager for learning and activity, Sunday School was a highlight of the week. I listened to Kindergarten of the Air and I played kindergarten with my dolls and teddy but these were activities of imagination – whereas Sunday School meant live action with real teachers and real children and the joy of listening to new stories, singing tuneful songs and colouring in.

It was really my first introduction to being with other children, to society, in fact. And it was a joyous one. My teachers, young as they were, were endlessly kind and welcoming, with ready smiles and an infectious enthusiasm.

So, there I was, in my best Sunday dress, patent shoes, clean white socks, clutching a very little handbag in which was a hanky and a tiny purse containing a few pennies and threepenny pieces – sometimes a sixpence or shilling.

Soon we'd be standing around in a circle, holding hands and singing our hearts out to the melody thumped on the piano and echoing around the room:

*Jesus wants me for a sunbeam,  
To shine for him each day;  
In ev'ry way try to please him,  
At home, at school, at play.  
Jesus wants me for a  
Sunbeam, a Sunbeam  
I'll be a Sunbeam for him.*

Then the stories -fabulous stories about extraordinary characters in exotic places. The ones from the Old Testament were totally captivating. The Great Flood, all those animals squeezing into the Ark and then the Dove and the Rainbow. Along the Nile, Miriam looking after Baby Moses. Small Joseph and his wonderful Coat of Many Colours. His wicked brothers. All those terrible plagues in Egypt. Moses leading everyone to the Promised Land and the Red Sea Parting. And then bravest of the brave, Daniel, in the Lion's Den and being saved! I'd listen, spellbound as the storyline unfolded, intrigued and delighted to find out how imminent tragedy and danger were overcome and Good triumphed. Lessons of hope and trusting in Providence were absorbed to reassure and provide a steadiness in a childish world where dangers could lurk in the corners of the mind.

Then there were the stories from the New Testament that had moral lessons to sharpen the conscience and nurture the instinct for compassion. The Story of the Good Samaritan, to

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inspire helping. The story of the House built on the Rock and not on the Sand, to inspire prudence. Lessons for daily life and civic duty. Lessons of social conscience and social justice.

And then the wonderful mysteries: the Feeding of the Crowds with Loaves and Fishes; Christ walking on Water; the Raising of Lazarus. And most wonderful of all: The Nativity at Christmas and the Resurrection at Easter. Stories that cultivated a sense of the Transcendent and Immanence, so that the world could be understood and considered from a more soulful perspective. Stories that imbued the everyday world with a sense of the marvellous and miraculous: dew on a spider web; a shaft of dust caught in sunlight; the trill of the willy-wagtail. Reverence and awe for all of creation.

But this pondering on the stories would come later, back on the farm. At Sunday School, after the story, there would be another song or two. A particular favourite was *Jesus Loves Me*.

*Jesus loves me, this I know,  
for the Bible tells me so.  
Little ones to him belong;  
they are weak, but he is strong.  
Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!  
Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.*

Then it was Activity Time. We'd all sit around the table -with a big tin of coloured pencils in the middle -rummaging out those needed for creating the scenes from the story as we imagined them. Mouth wide open, tongue in the corner to help producing worthy artworks.

While we worked on this, our teachers would look out from the cupboard the small Attendance Book of each child present and glue on its pages a small stamp-like piece of cardboard on which was a picture and biblical text. Underneath that new text they would write the day's date. Thus, in parallel with our endeavours, they were crafting for each, a unique religious artwork -which we could admire and take home at year's end.

After this spell of creativity, it was almost home time but before that, there was the splendid ceremony of Pennies Dropping. We took turns of taking around a model of a little church, which had a slot in its roof, through which you'd drop your pennies, or threepences or sixpences.

*Hear the pennies dropping!  
Listen while they fall;  
Ev'ry one for Jesus,  
He shall have them all,  
Dropping, dropping, dropping, dropping;  
Hear the pennies fall!  
Ev'ry one for Jesus,  
He shall have them all.*

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A little Blessing Prayer and then it was home time for another week. Home for a Sunday Roast and a Quiet Afternoon. Such was the ritual.

Once a year, Sunday School attendance also conferred the honour of a special church celebration – as part of the Harvest Festival in late Spring, when the church was decorated with the season’s bounty- flowers, fruit, vegetables and grain. We children sat expectantly in front of the whole congregation, each of us waiting to be called up for presentation of a specially selected book “For Attendance” at Sunday School; with our name handwritten on a Frontispiece Label. Such anticipation, such pride, such pleasure, such treasure.

I still have some of those books in my library: the earliest, picture books, the later ones, full chapter books. When I pick them up, as I do on occasion, hunting amongst things for my grandchildren, I recall the happy memories of those Sunday School Days. And now, looking back I can see and acknowledge how those lessons and their very ethos were not only important in shaping my worldview as a child but their influence lasted well beyond childhood, laying the foundation for my later understanding and experience of life as it unfolded over the years.

*Melbourne, May 2023*



## **Church Experiences in New Guinea**

*Ron Austin*

### ***The New Guinea Anglican church***

I was posted to work in New Guinea in the early 1960’s, as an aircraft Captain, flying passengers and freight into the interior of the Highlands. Here is a small cameo of living conditions at the time.

In 1963 the division of Christian responsibility within the New Guinea mainland had been completed by the relevant Christian Church organisations. When we arrived to live in Madang, which was part of the Catholic area, we researched our Anglican contacts. And we found a well-established Anglican church, in the care of Father Hatters. The church building was a permanent concrete brick structure with a peaked iron roof.

Joining this church gave us an introduction to other Europeans in this town. Sunday services were a highlight of our week. It gave a brief period of Australian normality to our family of three small girls who had attended church with Audrey and I, at St. Michael’s in Beaumaris, Melbourne. To accompany our hymns there was an old pedal organ of unknown age, and I discovered that it needed urgent attention. When the air pressure was pumped up by the organist, a constant note was sounding although no keys were pressed. Seeking help from

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Father Hatters I investigated the reason, I found the inside of the organ had mud nests, built by wasps, attached to the valves and actuators because the organ was only used on Sundays. With my engineering background I was able to remove the nests, devise replacement connectors for the valves using wire and nylon blind cord. This check developed into a regular task.

Another aspect of this church appreciated by the ladies were regular Women's gatherings organised by our Vicar's wife Con Hatters. Nothing formal, no traditional name like Mother's Union, but still a vital chance for exchanging conversation and helping each other. We lived in New Guinea for 3 years.

When working on Sundays, I was intrigued by a priest who flew his own Cessna aircraft to many short landing strips adjacent to villages to conduct services. In addition to his normal clothing, he wore around his waist, a useful bag of equipment for his church offices, braving treacherous flying conditions to complete his Sunday duties. One of our Airline pilots commented to him "Dan the Lord must look after you" he replied "He should, I work for Him".

### *A Story from New Guinea Days*

#### *A Medical Emergency while Flying in New Guinea*

This story may interest you as it illustrates the very human aspects of a birth in New Guinea in 1964. At that time the only Public transport available in New Guinea and the surrounding islands was to fly in Douglas DC3's aircraft. These planes were designed, in America in the 1930's. They were built in the 1940's for use in the Second World War.

In 1964 Trans Australia Airlines was using these aircraft for passenger and freight flying within NG and surrounding Islands. In this instance the airports of Manus, Kavieng and Rabaul, Let us climb aboard our twin engine propeller driven aircraft and be part of this pioneering medical occurrence 54 years ago as told by the Captain: *Capt. Brian Crane*

*Dispella master close to catchim nother fella picannini. (pidgin)*

Our flight schedule was to operate Lae, Madang and Wewak on the mainland, then off the coast to Manus, Kavieng and Rabaul. The aircraft was fitted, for this passenger flight with 28 forward facing seats. I was occupying the right hand seat training the competent and pleasant David Baker for his Command promotion. Our Hostess was an ex Australian nurse now based in Lae and we were all looking forward to a pleasant and uneventful flight.

However, we were not to know that the fabled "Murphy's law" was waiting to pounce on our complacency. After departing Wewak, on our way to Manus Isl. our hostess came forward to express some concern with a passenger, the wife of a native Police boi (in

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uniform) who was travelling to a posting to Rabaul with his pregnant Merri and two toddler picaninies. His wife could not speak the universal language “pidgin” and the Police boy was not particularly willing to communicate, so the Hostess was unable to find how advanced she was in her pregnancy. All he would say was “she alright”.

En-route to Manus our Hostess kept a close eye on her and noticed, at times, she seemed uncomfortable she promised to keep us informed. As Manus had Navy hospital facilities, we considered off-loading her there, but as she seemed now more settled we decided to press on. After departure for Kavieng our Hostess advised she was obviously getting 15 minute labour pains so watched her closely. When these reduced to 10 minutes we became concerned. I went back to the cabin to check where I could remove 2 vacant seats to lay her on the floor if we had to deliver mid-flight.

When I returned to the front David advised me he had been in touch with Rabaul Flight Service on HF radio. He had asked for their assessment of the best medical facilities, Manus or our destination Kavieng. As they assured us Kavieng had first class facilities we nominated to press on and they decided to have an ambulance waiting for us. As this was a training flight, I was careful to not usurp David’s “command thinking” role, I adopted the role of a helpful First Officer.

When Our Hostess brought the news of 5-minute contractions our only alternative was to get her to medical aid as quickly as possible. Here David showed clear thinking, saying “Brian, with your Highland experience of saving time for charters in this DC3 I want you to fly us to Kavieng and use this skill to give us our shortest possible flight time. This was a sound decision and well thought out. Starting a steady descent on cruise power we increased to 150 knots which is our flight maximum speed. Carefully monitoring the flight profile, I was able to judge height and speeds to utilise maximum speeds for gear extension and flap operation. We crossed the threshold at 81 knots, land and fast taxi to the parking area (just like an MG sports car) where the ambulance awaited us. Leaving David to shut down the aircraft, and dashing to the cabin, I saw our Hostess prioritizing the exit of our potential Mum. When I spotted the woman, she was in the doorway, legs apart clutching the door frame. Employing their usual skills the ambulance medics got her onto a stretcher and quickly on the way to the hospital.

When I submitted my Flight report on the incident I made a point of commending, not only my crew, but also the people who readily and cheerfully assisted us to bring about a great result. I was surprised to receive, a few weeks later, a letter from my TAA boss passing on the thanks of the New Guinea Administration for our actions. Apparently, the complications she had on delivery would have cost her and the picaninny their lives had we not got her to medical aid in time.

Nice to know when you do things right!    Brian.

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## Close to Home

David Keuneman

Our St Mary's parishioners, writing in our beloved AVE publication, have frequently taken us on descriptive trips around the world to visit buildings, sites, and art which are connected with the Madonna, our patron Saint Mary. Well, here is a little treasure which is close to home, within a gentle three kilometre journey through the central city. The hale and hearty might care to walk all the way, others can take a pleasant tram trip.

Just a stroll down Howard Street to the corner of Victoria Street, and you will find stop 9 of the No. 57 tram line. If you do care to wait here for a tram then you can ignore – or not, at your discretion – the looming presence across the road of the “other St Mary's”. (St Mary's Star of the Sea is sometimes confused with ours by out-of-towners, although it technically lies in West Melbourne and not in North Melbourne at all.)

Then travelling on beyond our dear Queen Victoria Market, you turn into the city, over to Swanston Street at some stage, past our own St Paul's cathedral, eventually to cross over Princes Bridge (1888, designed and engineered by John Grainger [1855–1917] – father of composer Percy Grainger).

Passing the concert hall and the opera theatre, you soon arrive at our destination, 180 St Kilda Rd, Southbank; the **National Gallery of Victoria**.

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Very recently I had a catch-up rendezvous at the NGV with a recently bereaved friend, with whom I needed to spend a little time. Having had a couple of coffees and a long natter, we decided each to show the other a painting which they did not know.

Mine hangs in the eighteenth century collection, and was by an accomplished Swedish painter of portraits – mostly portraits of European aristocrats of the time – *Alexander Roslin (1718-1793)*. Although a highly competent work, it is perhaps not one which would generally excite huge interest. However the subject of this 1776 painting is a youngish *Count Andrey Kyrillovich Razumovsky*, an aristocrat who some three decades later was Russian ambassador to Vienna. Here he commissioned Ludwig van Beethoven to write the most celebrated of his “middle period” string quartets, a group of three which are to this day generally referred to as Beethoven's Razumovsky Quartets. It is interesting for musicians, at least, to contemplate gratefully the generous face behind the name.



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What my friend in turn had in store for me was a much deeper experience. He took me further round the corridors into the area for sixteenth century art, to find a work which to my shame I had not viewed before, despite the NGV having had it in its possession for well over a decade.

It is the *Madonna and Child with infant Saint John the Baptist*, a masterpiece painted around 1514 by *Antonio Allegri da Correggio* (1489 –1534).

**Coreggio**, as he is simply known these days, was a painter at the forefront of the High Italian Renaissance, the others being Leonardo, Raphael and the young Michelangelo. He was born in the small town of that name, and spent most of his career in the city of Parma. A somewhat brooding character himself, he was an imaginative experimental artist, a painter not only of religious themes, but also of classical mythology often with a voluptuous illusionary aspect.



Correggio was criticised in his own period for not spending enough time in Rome, and so was not as highly valued then as painters who did do so; and equally he did not leave a trail of influence behind him. His repute these days however is high, and the NGV was fortunate enough, astute enough, and well-endowed enough to acquire this work in 2011, the only authenticated Correggio sold on the auction market in half a century

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The Correggio Madonna went on display at the NGV for a while, allowing the public to become familiar with it. It was then taken out of circulation for a period whilst it underwent an expert and exquisite restoration, recovering its original vibrancy which had been somewhat subdued by dark varnishes and slight damages of age.

It is now back on display as a jewel of the collection.

I am taken by the naturalness of the two children, and in particular struck by John, arms crossed like chubby-cheeked Bavarian cherub. He is far from the later wild figure crying out in the wilderness, in camel's hair clothing, living on locusts and wild honey.

Instead of Jesus coming to the slightly older John to be baptised, as he did later in life, it seems here that the infant deliberately leans out towards John as if placing a benign and affectionate full left-palm on his curly locks whilst his right hand gestures with the double-fingered blessing of a pontiff.

Whatever the symbolism, here are two active youngsters in the pink of good health, calm and at ease in their beings, displaying little sign of future turmoil. It is however the eyes of Mary, looking pensively into the distance, which could show the anticipatory awareness of other things to come.

We are greatly privileged to have this tableau available to view so close to home.  
Go see.

## 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*

