

St Mary's Matters

.....
WHO ARE YOU? WHO AM I?
.....



“
I came into the world
at the right time and
I shall leave the world
at the right time.
I am content
with whatever happens
between the womb
and the tomb,
Neither joy nor sorrow
can touch me
”
I am free from all bonds.
Chuang Tzu
Taoist
3rd century BCE

Contents

Consciousness of the Heart

Terry Fitzpatrick - page 3

Who Am I?

Mike Sherman - page 6

Celebrating with the Uniting Church

Photostory - page 7

Who are You? Who am I?

Barbara Fingleton - page 8

The Universe - its story is our story

Terry Fitzpatrick - page 9

The Journey

Helen Shaw - page 12

Upon Returning to St Mary's

Margot Henry - page 13

Sallywattle Eucharist and Picnic

Photostory - pages 14 and 15

Who Am I

Shar Ryan - page 16

Simply Be Who you Are

Penny Wearne - page 17

The Place for Liturgy

John Chuchman - page 18

Under the Tree

What people are reading - page 19

Wise Words

Ted - page 19

Breakfast at the Broncos

Photostory - page 20

Aussie bleeders

Joan Medlum - page 21

Global Warming

Kinetic Energy - page 22

Letter from a Friend

Pippa Bonner - page 23

Human Purpose

Patricia Byrne - page 24

From the Clusters

Fairfield Cluster - page 26

Northern Cluster - page 27

The Trouble with St Mary's

Photostory - page 28



From the Editor

I find non-dualism is easy to understand but impossible to turn into anything more than momentary reality for me. This edition of the magazine has a variety of responses to the questions 'Who am I? Who are you? Not all are concerned with non-dualism, but some are. I hope you find something of value in this issue for your own journey. My contribution is a quote I was sent today. It spoke to me and, I hope, will to you.

"Today may there be peace within. May you trust that you are exactly where you are meant to be. May you not forget the infinite possibilities that are born of faith in yourself and others. May you use the gifts that you have received, and pass on the love that has been given to you. May you be content with yourself just the way you are. Let this knowledge settle into your bones, and allow your soul the freedom to sing, dance, praise and love. It is there for each and every one of us." Anon

Marg Ortiz - Editor

Ideas for our theme for the Autumn edition of our magazine include "Prayer" and 'Do you believe in Miracles?'. If one of these gels with you email the editor on margdoc2@gmail.com

Consciousness of the Heart

Matthew 20:1-16, 20

“For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire labourers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the labourers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard.

When he went out about nine o’clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace and he said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.’ So they went. When he went out again about noon and about three o’clock, he did the same. And about five o’clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, ‘Why are you standing here idle all day?’ They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard.’

When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, ‘Call the labourers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.’ When those hired about five o’clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, saying, ‘These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’

But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?’ So the last will be first, and the first will be last.”

This parable is more like a Zen Buddhist Koan, a riddle given by the Zen master to the student to focus the mind during meditation and to develop intuitive heart-thinking.

Of all of Jesus’ parables this is probably one of the hardest to understand. It seems as though the owner of the vineyard is being unjust in paying the last the same as the first.

Those who had toiled all day in the sun were compared to those who sat around and did nothing all day. Should not there be a just and fair reward?

We are left puzzled if we approach this parable with the dualistic mind: the judging mind which is concerned with who’s in and who’s out, who’s right and who’s wrong, the mind which is weighing and measuring.

Jesus is inviting us to meta-noia often translated to “repent” (meta, to transcend; noia, the perceiving thinking mind) – to transcend the small mind and move into the larger mind, the mind of God.

I would like to use a metaphor from the world of computers to explain a little further the small mind.



I am borrowing from the work of Cynthia Bourgeault, Jim Marion and Ken Wilbur, theologians, sociologists, scientists and spiritual teachers.

They say we come into the world with a certain operating system installed within us. Throughout our lives we have an opportunity to upgrade this system if we wish to do so. We come into the world with what they refer to as a Binary operating system, an *either* or system, our egoic operating system. Built into our brain is a self-reflexive consciousness which has the ability to stand outside ourself as an object.

This system is subject/object orientated. That is how it works. It divides the world into in/out; subject/object; me/it; inside/outside.

Our early childhood training teaches us to run this operating system, illustrated well in the song and activity

on Sesame Street “One of these things is not like the other ...”

The child is learning to think in terms of discriminating how everything is distinct from everything else. We learn how the table is not a chair, how a dog is not like a cat. This training helps us to operate the binary system.

When we discover our identity through the binary operating system, we experience ourselves as a person with distinct qualities and differences. We experience ourselves in ways that we are not like the other. We begin to list all the things that make us different. “I am an Aries, I have red hair, I am an 8 on the Enneagram scale, and INFD on the Myer-Briggs personality scale, a Catholic, a Jew, a Protestant, a priest, rabbi, minister.”

In this operating system we experience others as outside ourselves and ourselves as distinct and fixed identities with distinct and peculiar life experiences that go to make up who I am. And what does life look like when we use the Binary system we come with? Well it thinks in terms of Good/Bad; Right/Wrong; Before/After.

It gives us a solid sense of ourself as the one who is at the hub of all this Duality.

But really this identity we have constructed is a mere mirage. Modern science and all the great religious traditions have said this

for centuries. Their central teachings are on the impermanence of life.

With science we now know that all of matter is made up of rapidly moving atoms, coming into existence and moving out of existence.

These outer forms are merely illusion – a bit like looking at a fast spinning propeller on a plane. When a light is shone through the fast spinning blades, the blades look solid like a golden solid circle. It looks like it has depth and dimension, density and solidity. One has to keep reminding oneself that it is a mirage created by a fast moving propeller.

So is our sense of identity created by the binary operating system?

There is no small self or egoic being. Nothing is separated from anything else that has inside and an outside. This is a symptom of this operating system that divides the world up into duality in order to perceive itself.

Jesus is constantly inviting us in the gospels to upgrade our operating system. Life is going to look a whole lot different when you do.

The operating system into which Jesus is inviting us to move is beyond a mind which separates everything to a mind which seeks unity – sometimes called the unitive mind, the non-dual mind, or, as the mystics prefer, the operating system of the Heart.

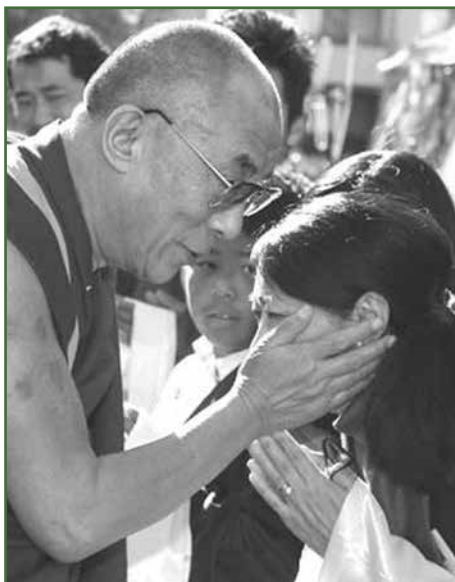
This new consciousness does not make distinctions in order to Be.

In the wisdom tradition this operating from the Heart is not as we have classically understood it in the west. We often pair it off against the mind. We say a person is in their mind if they are wedded to cerebral thinking and in their heart if they are emotional.

We think of the heart as the centre of our emotional life. In the wisdom tradition, the heart is primarily an organ of inner alignment – a vast and highly proficient and powerful organ of perception of the world. The heart can pick up reality in a much deeper, profound and multi-spectrum way than our poor mind could ever hope to.

The Sufi teacher Kadir Kelmenski described the heart as – *“We have subtle subconscious facilities we are not using. Beyond the limited analytic intellect is a vast realm of mind that includes psychic and extrasensory abilities, intuition, wisdom, and a sense of unity. Aesthetic, qualitative and creative faculties, image-forming and symbolic capacities, and though these faculties are many, we give them a single name, with some justification because they are operating best when they are operating in concert.*

They comprise a mind in line with the cosmic mind, this total mind we call Heart.”



For most wisdom traditions the heart is the organ of spiritual alignment and keeps us aligned with our innermost and what we truly know.

It keeps us aligned as we move beyond the obvious and what is accessible to us by our five senses – our limited Cartesian mind.

‘atmosphere of peace and harmony’

It moves beyond the Binary mind of separation; rather it perceives harmony. It sees from a point of singleness of non-duality, of oneness. No separation between God and human, human and human, human and creation. Separation is not factored into its operating system – a whole new way of seeing and being.

When the Dalai Lama was in Brisbane, many of us went to listen to him. What most of us overwhelmingly remember is the wonderful atmosphere of peace and harmony which he

generated with his infectious spirit and personality.

During the question time, a woman became so distressed as she related the dreadful situation of her own life, and began to weep. The Dalai Lama left his chair and moved down into the crowd and embraced her with a deep compassion. Here is a man moving from that deeper place of the Heart.

Jesus wanted to move people into this new mind, to this meta-noia.

For those who heard this parable of the vineyard at the time of Jesus, Jesus wanted to challenge their small mindedness. He wanted to challenge the binary operating systems from which they were living their lives – who is deserving and who is not; them and us.

In this new but ancient operating system which Jesus is challenging them to upgrade to, there is no separation; everyone is in, everyone is deserving, there is enough for everyone. The good of everyone can be tended to, all are equal, all are deserving.

Jesus wants his listeners to be catapulted into a whole new way of seeing and being.

For unless this unitive mind, this consciousness of the Heart takes hold, it is almost impossible to do the Gospel, to really live Jesus’ teachings.

Terry Fitzpatrick

Who Am I?

Let's have a look at the poem below by the Sufi poet and mystic, Rumi. It is called "The Guest House".

*This being human is a guest house,
Every morning a new arrival.
A joy, a depression, a meanness,
Some momentary awareness comes
As an unexpected visitor.
Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if they are a crowd of sorrows,
Who violently sweep your house
Empty of its furniture.
Still treat each guest honourably.
He may be clearing you out
For some new delight.
The dark thought, the shame, the malice,
Meet them at the door laughing, and
Invite them in.
Be grateful for whoever comes,
Because each has been sent
As a guide from beyond.*

Your life is the Guest House. The guests are all the thoughts, emotions and experiences that come into your life. Guests are not meant to stay. They come and go. Some stay longer than others and some keep returning more than others, but they are all only temporary visitors. The host is always there and is the Consciousness which is aware

of the guests coming and going. All that changes is not you. You are this Awareness.

You are the host. The host welcomes all guests, meeting them at the door laughing, and inviting them in because the host is conscious that there is something to be learnt from each guest. So when you can be aware of all your thoughts, feelings and experiences without judgment, and with a sense of humour and gratitude, you have become the "detached witness" that Buddhists talk about. You are then living from your true self rather than mistakenly identifying yourself with your body and mind. As Christ emphasized, "Be in the world, but not of it."

So in essence you are not your mind or your personality or your ego, but the consciousness which is aware of these things. Now the big problem we then strike is thinking that mind, ego, personality are all bad or wrong and we need to put in this almighty effort to "fix" them. Well, that won't get you there.

In the "Wisdom of the Enneagram" Don Riso and Russ Hudson made this statement, which is so relevant to this idea: "One of the major obstacles to transformation is the idea that we can "fix" ourselves.... The idea that we simply need to discover and accept who we are is contrary to almost everything we have been taught."

So how do we go about discovering experientially who we are? We embark on this journey from Ego to Spirit, which is really the Christian "death / resurrection" story, by becoming the detached observer of who we are not.

Observe your thoughts and feelings in your everyday relationships, but do this with as little judgment as possible. It is a matter of shining light on the darkness to dispel it, not a matter of fighting the darkness. In a sense then it is the Holy Spirit (or Higher Self) doing the work, not your egoic self. We do this also by taking opportunities to bring ourselves into "stillness" in nature or in meditation.

The American spiritual teacher, Gangaji, has this to say about your connection with God or your real essence: "The root of all suffering is the belief, and the continual practice of the belief, that you are separate from pure, limitless consciousness; that you are a separate entity, and that you are located in a separate body."

Mike Sherman

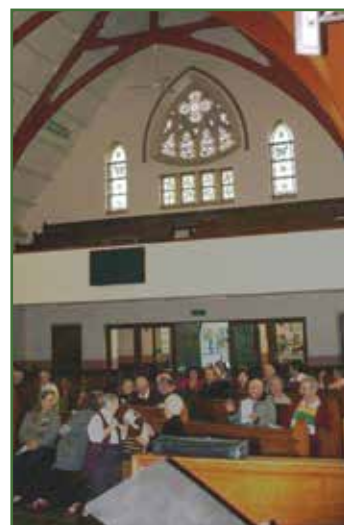


**Welcome guest
'Come stay awhile'**

St Mary's Matters

Celebrating with the Uniting Church

On July 24th we shared a liturgy with our friends at the Uniting Church. It was just lovely to be in a church building and we were very grateful to the Uniting Church people who welcomed us so warmly. We were led in our celebration by Peter and Terry, Kerry and Noel from the Uniting Church, and Narelle, previously of our community, now ordained in the Independent Catholic Church. Morning tea in the hall gave us a good opportunity to get to know each other better.



It was rather nice to be back in a church!



Noel Preston, Terry Fitzpatrick, Narelle Oliver, Kerry Pierce and Peter Kennedy - celebrated together with us at the Uniting Church



The 'Belles' (above) and the '5pm Musos' (below) who lead us in music at our combined celebration



Morning tea in the hall



Who are you – Who am I ?

a finger pointing and /or what is being pointed to?

I am grateful for an experience that radically changed my awareness. I will share it with you.

My parents accepted the priest's request to celebrate mass at our country home where all our catholic neighbors were invited to attend and stay for breakfast.

As I waited for mass to begin, I was rather relieved that God would not see me. No one could be more separated or distant. I was eight years old, and was suffering from a poor self image. Even though I expected not to be heard, a cry came from deep within me: "I want to know the truth. I want to be good, to love and be lovable". I did notice the wafer and thought it to be a symbol of my insignificant self.

Unexpectedly, a strong and gentle thought energy full of the experience of compassionate love imprinted the words on me: "I AM IDENTIFIED WITH YOUR NOTHINGNESS". In the grace of THAT PRESENCE I dived into nothingness.

In the experience that followed there was no eight year old girl, magnificent presence of Jesus, the world or anything. There was the fullness of Being, All that is, 'The Everything'. Because it was experienced without words or concepts, I hesitate to use words. All the pointers of eternal qualities resonate.

At some point Barbara started to come back with the thought that it was overwhelming. I got the clear message that if I wanted to stay in the effortless natural Beingness I would have to leave little Barbara in the state of nothingness.

The experience parted for me to have freedom. "Oh! little Barbara, but I am responsible for little Barbara. I must not leave her in a state of nothingness. I must make something of her – even (wait for it) a miserable something."

With that I was standing in the lounge room. Everyone had left the room and were now heard talking and laughing around the breakfast table with the smells of food coming from the kitchen. More importantly, the non-judgmental loving presence was there telling me that, at least, I now knew my true Self and I had healing to do before I could freely choose to be in a state of nothingness. The presence of Jesus assured me he would help and told me with thought energy: "your life is mine, my life is yours – We are the one identity (Self)."

I felt so changed within. I could have died without any regrets for years unlived. I looked around and saw separate things but realized it must not be true because the reality was unity- oneness. For the first time I felt compassion for anyone who thought they were on a ladder



to God. I knew that when I felt anguish and wretchedness the Self was my reality, but I just didn't know. Whether I wake up at 8, 80 or 108 the True Self would be just as complete.

So now what have I to say about who you are and who I am? The One Consciousness – "The Mystery in which we are all embedded" is expressing and meeting itself in myriads of ways – in us, as spiritual beings having a human experience with lessons to

Silence God is all that is

learn and healings. The Self is present. In the NOW of each moment, in the 'what is' – all is well with wondrous opportunities for awareness and embracing 'what is' – regardless what might be the experience.

When the cry that I mentioned earlier arose from my heart, I thoroughly believed that I didn't have the truth.

Continued on page 27

the universe, its story is our story



I don't know if any of you had the good fortune to watch some or all of "The Wonders of the Universe", a television series produced by the BBC and hosted by Professor Brian Cox.

The series comprised of four episodes each of which focused on an aspect of the universe, from the nature of time, and the elements of which all living things are made, to the central place of gravity and light.

'a new but ancient story'

He begins by stating that we are part of the universe, its story is our story. This is not the story many of us were brought up with, where we were made as a separate entity to the rest of creation and placed within creation to rule over it.

This new but ancient story starts with the beginning of the universe; it began 13.7 billion years ago.

St Mary's Matters

Today it is filled with over a hundred billion galaxies each containing hundreds of billions of stars. Wow, how do we get our heads around this for we know that in our galaxy, the Milky Way, light travelling at 300,000 kilometres a second takes 100,000 light years to cross and there are billions of these galaxies.

Life as we know it, maybe that is when the first animals appear on the earth some 590 million years ago. Life as we know it, Professor Cox explained at one point, is only possible for one thousandth of a billion, billion billionth, billion, billion, billionth, billion, billion, billionth of a percent of the life-span of the universe (life has simply come and gone). And of that barely conceivable fraction, a human life occupies only a very tiny space. You wonder whether it's really worth getting up in the morning!

It can send you into a severe case of "What's it all mean? What's it all about?" It reminds me of the *Galaxy*

Song from Monty Python's Meaning of Life.

*"Whenever life gets you down
Mrs. Brown,
And things seem hard or tough,
And people are stupid,
obnoxious or daft,
And you feel that you've had quite enough,
Just remember that you're standing on a planet that's evolving
And revolving at 900 miles an hour."*

They go into singing about all the things I have just spoken of concerning the universe and they finish with,

*"So remember, if you're feeling very small and insecure,
How amazingly unlikely is your birth
And pray that there's intelligent life
Somewhere out in space
Cause there's bugger all down here on Earth"*

The way we are treating our planet would not indicate much intelligent life here on earth.

Embracing this new understanding of the universe certainly puts into perspective many of the things we worry and concern ourselves with.

Many of us here are here today because we believe that there is something more, something beyond the form,

‘we believe that there is something more, something beyond the form, the material world in which we find ourselves.’

the material world in which we find ourselves. We have called that ‘something beyond’ many names, God, Spirit, Presence, Consciousness, All that is, the Ground of our Being. But not everyone has this sense, this belief. And for many of us, who have grown up with this belief, we could not imagine life without it.

The understandings of what and who this presence is has probably changed and evolved. The moment of actually believing in such a presence may not be a memory many of us have, there may have been moments of doubt, or even years of doubt and a re-emergence of belief.

Spiritual teacher, Adyashanti speaks of this moment of seeing, of belief, as a Virgin Birth. In many of the stories of the great spiritual teachers, Avatars, there is often a virgin birth. Why is this so? Could it be, he suggests, and moving

beyond a literal understanding to a metaphorical understanding, could it be a moving beyond the coming together of opposites such as a male and female to form life. That in a virgin birth there is no need for the coming together of opposites, there is a recognition of something beyond the world of form?

The virgin birth is the moment of TIME, the first spark where there is this first recognition of the TIMELESS, formless one life which precedes the coming together of opposites.

It is interesting in the programme “Wonders of the Universe”, Brian Cox discusses the elements of which all life are made. He explains how these elements are related to the life cycles of the stars. That in the entire universe there are only 92 elements, all of which are present here on earth, and many go to making up a human life.

What is fascinating and why I am relating this, is that all matter, all elements are comprised of the coming together of two, and something like Carbon which is the basic building block for all life was forged in the death of a Supernova, a stellar explosion of a huge star which dies over a period of a few weeks and months and during this time can radiate as much energy as the sun is expected to emit over its entire life span. At the core of the explosion at 50 billion degrees Celsius, the Carbon atom can be formed. The whole death/new life motif

is present in this wonderful galactic event, and to think we are the product of the death of a supernova, some time in the distant past. It makes looking into the skies at night a wonderful intimate moment.

Just imagine our being birthed in the heavens, in the galactic realms of outer space. Take this wonder to all that surrounds us on this marvellous planet, particularly on a day like today when everything appears brighter after the clearing, cleaning qualities of recent rains, and wonder at how we are all the products of the one beginning.

‘making sense of this amazing expanding universe, and the meaning of life’

In Matthew’s Gospel (Matthew 16:10-27) Jesus speaks of the death/rebirth motif. *“Jesus began to show the disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering and be killed, and on the third day be raised.”*

Peter took Jesus aside and began to rebuke him saying “God forbid it! This must never happen to you.” But Jesus turned and said to Peter “Get behind me Satan! You are a stumbling block to me: for you are setting your mind not on DIVINE things but on human things.”

The journey to making sense of this amazing expanding



universe, and the meaning of life, is a journey of death, death to the ego, the small self, the mind made self, the mind caught in the words of Jesus to Peter, stuck on human things, the world of form, the exterior material world.

To get this we are invited by Jesus over and over in the Gospels to go beyond this world of form – to *meta noia*. (*meta* meaning *to transcend*; *noia*, translated *mind*, but in particular the small mind often translated *to repent*) but in a better translation Jesus is inviting us to the larger mind, the mind which

embraces the oneness of life, beyond a separate identity.

To do this takes a death and at times great suffering because of the great attachment we have to our separate identities and to the world of form.

But with this death can come a rebirth, a virgin birth, a tiny spark of realization, of something beyond form, beyond the coming together of opposites, an embracing of this mysterious unseen presence.

And as Jesus, who is birthed by the virgin, becomes the light of the world, so too this realization within us that my

true essence is beyond form, that I am one with the great I am. That I too, in my egoless essence, Am, the light of the world.

I would like to finish with the Buddhist practice of ringing the bell three times.

The sound of the bell representing the form which comes into existence but fades and dies out of existence. Like the universe we have just described. We enjoy the form in an unattached way while it lasts, represented in the sound of the bell, but we also enjoy the silence from which it emerges. The silence where the great I AM resides and where we are one with this I AM.

*Homily 27th, 28th August
By Terry Fitzpatrick*



Visitors from Melbourne, Peter and Lorraine Walker loved our liturgy. Here they are with Peter, Marg, Terry and Doc



The Journey

Friend, I have lost the way.
The way leads on.

Is there another way?
The way is one.

I must retrace the track.
It's lost and gone.

Back, I must track back!
None goes there, none.

Then I'll make here my place –
The road runs on.

Stand still and set me free.
The road leaps on.

Stay here, forever stay.
None stops here, none.

I cannot find the way.
The way leads on.

Oh, places I have passed!
That journey's done.

And what will come at last?
The way leads on.

Edwin Muir
Submitted by Helen Shaw

Upon Returning to St. Mary's

As a newly returned parishioner to St. Mary's (SMX) I was intrigued by the theme of the spring magazine which is 'Who am I? Who are You?' I hope to share some of my thoughts about the journey away from and back to St. Mary's.

I was a parishioner at St. Mary's (up the road) for about ten years, was married there and my first born was baptised there. Two days after Sam's baptism in March 1996 my husband and I left Brisbane to move to the Lismore area. It was a difficult period – leaving Brisbane behind, leaving my church community and with a tiny baby. I missed St. Mary's terribly and found it hard to settle into a more conventional parish. Nevertheless, I joined the Alstonville parish as it had a warm and energetic congregation and was next to two schools. I was made very welcome and Sam quickly became the mascot of the parish's social justice committee. I became a member of the parish council and my husband joined us as members of the parish's family group movement. Being a rural church made it easier to make friends as the community was small and connected.

I enjoyed attending Mass at Alstonville with my now two boys and came to realise that being part of that church community was very fulfilling. The two things I loved best

were sharing the Eucharist and the end of Mass! I was always happy to finish the inside bit and then gather outside to talk with my fellow parishioners – much to my children's chagrin!

When people ask me why I remain a Catholic I always respond that, despite my reservations about the Church, it is because I am part of a faith and social community. Community is the glue that keeps me coming back. And so upon returning to Brisbane for my husband's work I was again cut adrift from my faith community of Alstonville and missed it terribly – sound familiar? The question for me was to find a parish I could feel comfortable and be part of again. Should I join my local parish or return to St. Mary's in Exile? I was unsure whether to return here as so much had changed in the previous fifteen years. Would it be a disappointment after my rosy memories of the old church? Would I know anyone? How had the community coped with all the traumas of the past two years? Had everything just moved on too far! Would the boys like it?

I did some local 'parish shopping' for a couple of months but often felt bereft at the end of the Masses. I had no sense of belonging but kept thinking that time would fix this. I found lovely, warm parishes (but with terrible liturgy, music and singing)



but the main stumbling block was the Catholic orthodoxy I no longer fully believed in. The last straw was to be the introduction of the new regressive liturgy. I realised I was in exile also!

Upon returning to St. Mary's my feelings were mixed and I still have a sensation of being both an old friend and yet a stranger. While I am still finding my bearings, I am thoroughly enjoying the experience. I especially love the music, the homilies, the prayers of the faithful and the communal Eucharistic celebration. The community has inevitably changed as it has been through so much. Nevertheless I sense that St. Mary's people have moved a long way towards recovering from the traumas of the last couple of years and have emerged stronger and clearer about their vision of church. There is a gentle spirit of freedom, liberation and joy amongst the community. A strong, loyal, open, passionate and warm community is evident and I look forward, with my boys, to growing again to be part of this remarkable and enduring faith community.

Margot Henry





Sallywattle Eucharist and Picnic

The weather was perfect, the landscape looked magnificent and the people were happy and friendly. What more could one need to have a great community gathering. Thanks Peter for your gracious hospitality. It really was a very good day.
Photos by Margaret Lawson and Liz Little



Who am I?

The Short Answer Is...

but the vital details, the full story, is deeply buried in the fine print of our lives.

I am a woman, I am a mother. A member of SMX. But nothing that can be said of me can really define who I am.

I am, you are, each of us is, Unique. And it is for this reason that I maintain that my relationship with my God, indeed even my idea of God is uniquely mine. It is what makes sense for me in the here and now. I have grown to who I am out of the experiences of a lifetime. I began with the genetic inheritance of my ancestors but have been moulded by every person I have met, every story I have read, and every experience I have had. Those around me were moulded too by their own experiences and for the most part we are unaware of the ripple effect of our actions.

I am unique and rejoice in that difference but I realise too that I am one with each and every human being and with all that is.

I cannot say as some have said "I realise I am God," without qualifying that statement. I certainly feel and experience my oneness with God but I am in the here and now.

I am (or can be) God only in a way similar to that in which my hand or any other

part of my body could claim to be me. Without the mind, the muscles and other parts of ME, that hand would not be able to catch that ball, paint that picture, play that instrument, or caress my child. I am an integral part of this Infinite Being but only by recognising the very real but comparatively insignificant part I play in the flowering of creation, am I able to begin to

"there but for the grace of God go I."

fulfil my potential.

Did you see the film *The Tree of Life*? I cannot truly say I enjoyed it but it will live with me for a very long time, I have long felt that I can never judge another person as "there but for the grace of God go I." I sincerely believe that only a God who knows and understands us in the depths of our being can appreciate how someone who commits even the most heinous crimes can be deluded enough to choose that path believing sincerely that is the best or only option.

Everyone makes his decisions on what seems to him at that time the best thing to do. I may take that second



piece of cake because I desire the wonderful taste of its sweetness while I, for the moment, put in a lower priority the effect it may have on my waistline or indeed my health. I thank God that the experiences that shaped me have not deluded me sufficiently to lead me up too many dangerous paths, but I realise that having had so many advantages much more is asked of me. Anything therefore that I do achieve is not mine alone but the end point of the growth over many generations of the spiritual life of my ancestors and mentors.

We are privileged to live in this generation. So many more people today have had an education that allows and encourages them to question everything. For me this means looking at what the great thinkers of the past and especially what the poets and mystics may have meant when, in the words and

cultures of their times, they described their experiences of oneness with God and others.

Only by looking at what they have to tell us can we build on what they have learned. We do not have to re-invent the wheel but today we need wheels that are so much more

efficient, last longer, and make our ride much more comfortable!

Infinity in mathematics acts as if plus and minus infinity were the same thing – we can imagine them meeting out there in infinite space. Good and Evil seem to be in some

ways, also, the two sides of the same coin. It is almost impossible to imagine but essential never the less to some of us to make the effort to understand - We are one with an Infinite Being yet we are rooted firmly in the here and now. We are Mystery and.....

Shar Ryan

Simply Be Who You Are

**Not a mother
Not a lover
Not a wife
Or
Friend**

**Not a sister
Not a daughter
Or work mate
Just me,
full stop,
Amen!**

**As I was born
So shall I die
Simply before you
Just me
With a little “i”**

Penny Wearne

The Place for Liturgy

Jesus preached the Good News
of God's Love for All.

Many in power label some people
Unworthy
to enter the Family of God.

I trust that
Jesus wished to move us
away from Fear, the tool of the powerful,
into Love,
His Gift of Freedom,
threatening the Church Elders of His time and
ours.

The Eucharistic Blood we drink
has everything to do with
recognizing our own Divine Bloodline,
the Gift of Life itself;
less to do with sacrifice and death.

By having a ceremony, a liturgy,
in homes,
Jesus moved religion
from the Temple to the Home.

He changed Liturgy/Religion
from the worship of some distant God
to an intimate Gathering (Ecclesia)
with Family and Friends.

Jesus revealed that
there is no need for a mediator
between us and God.
We all are the new priests and prophets
proclaiming the Good News of Jesus.

When Jesus brought Liturgy/Religion
back into the Home,
where it was always meant to be,
He affirmed that We are all special people,
upsetting those in power
who considered themselves the special people.
The Good News

is Jesus' initial instruction to the Apostles:
"Tell people, God is Within."

So why have we moved
the Sacred Table
out of our homes,
solely into the Temple,
reinstalling hierarchical mediators
twixt us and God?

Why have we changed the meaning
of Ecclesia/Gathering
into church building
where official Liturgies
can only be conducted
and only by a select few?

Why have we moved out of
Freedom and Love
gifted us by God,
confirmed by Jesus,
back into Fear
of breaking rules and regulations?

Why have we failed
to acknowledge and accept
our Divine bloodline,
dwelling in a false sense of unworthiness,
used to control us?

The liturgy/religion of Jesus
was one of Love,
Friendship, Relationship.

Where and with Whom
is the best place
to celebrate True Liturgy
in your life?

John Chuchman

Under the Tree



Perfect Brilliant Stillness

David Carse

Paragate Publishing, Vermont

Peter says this book is the 'last one you need to read'. In saying this he is rather at odds with the author, who says, in the introduction "I would encourage any reasonable person not to buy this book'. David Carse goes on to say that the book may be 'quite disturbing'.

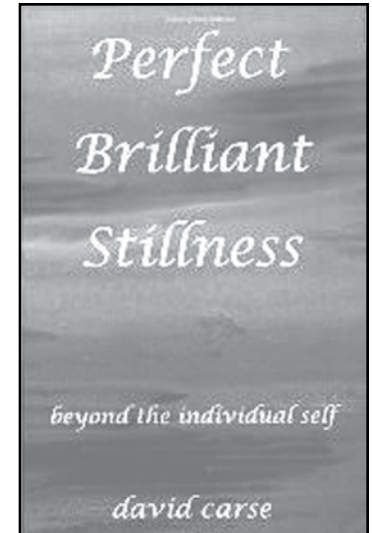
Presumably we have been forewarned and we read it at our own peril. I don't know how this resonates with you, but it says to me 'Do your damndest' and I buy the book and read it. I'm not going to be intimidated by an author!!

What People are Reading

Well I have to admit I am still reading the book and I recommend that you do too. The responses of others may encourage you to do so.

Robert Gussner, of Vermont University Dept. of Religion is ecstatic. He says, in part, '*Beyond St Augustine, who invented the literary genre of the autobiography and wrote a spiritual autobiography of the peak experiences of a separate self, comes this account of the No-Self, continuing and updating the tradition of the great mystics and sages*'

Jerry Katz who wrote *Nondual Highlights* says this book '*seems to be a turning point, landmark book....Perfect Brilliant Stillness could take its place as a well-known, outstanding statement of truth, reality, understanding*'.



PBS is available from the Community Shop or to borrow from our library. Take a risk – be disturbed. As it says in The Hut – the only secure place is if we turn back.

Marg Ortiz

**Let us stand together
Like links in a chain
Keeping faith**

Ted



Breakfast at the Broncos

20/8/11



Aussie bleeders



We're Aussies
we don't give
a shit about
conventions

Even from the U. N.
or international law
that gives all people
the right to seek asylum



We're all right mate
in Fortress Australia
Bloody hell we're
not American

We don't have a
froggie statue
saying give us
your starving



Your huddled masses
can fuck off if they
arrive by boat - fair skins
on planes won't get locked up

Economically we're
still riding sheep
As far as we're concerned
- we're not.

Joan Medlam



Kinetic Energy Presentation



Co-directors Graham Jones and Jepke Goudsmit performed an excerpt from their climate change justice show.

Graham acted the part of Dr James Hansen, the head of NASA's Climate Change Department in the USA. With Jepke's assistance Dr Hansen demonstrated the science of climate change and its impacts – both presently happening and what can be expected. The demonstration was done in a lively interactive way and simplified a very complex topic so it could be easily understood.



Kinetic Energy uses theatre as a tool to tell stories of social justice, to raise awareness and stimulate debate and action.

Letter of Support from a Friend from Afar

Dear St Mary's Community

I am writing from the UK having recently heard about you from reading "Peter Kennedy The Man Who Threatened Rome". I feel very drawn to the story of how your Community developed and the diversity of liturgy and activities and the empowerment that shines through. I am sure you have your times of challenge and difficulty but it seems you accept and are accepted in your parish community: men and women, all races, abilities and sexualities. I am sure your journey "into exile" was at times painful and difficult but you made it, and seem to be flourishing. Exile from what? Exile sounds an excluded, lonely place but your community appears to be very much not that...It looks to me like the glimpses we get of the original early Christian communities that were known by the care and concern they had for each other.

Writing from a personal point of view I am beginning to wonder whether the Roman Catholic church can reform. It is apparently more centralised and hierarchical than it has ever been and the reforms of Vatican 11 seem to be a distant memory. You folks in Australia have had the "new" English translation of the Mass, three months ahead of us. As you probably know the original process got taken away from the Bishops in the

1990s and there have been two hijacks of the process since by the Curia, and the Vatican completed the job. It is exclusive language (even more so). The whole imposed process is symptomatic of the remote, absolute power of the Vatican. However this "new" translation probably doesn't affect you as you will be using liturgy that you as a community have put together and that you "own" because you are part of creating it and it is for you all.

So, you will understand why I and many others are searching, as you have done and continue to do. In your community you seem to welcome everyone, you have some necessary structure and organisation but there is an openness to collaborative ministry by and for all and a discernment of people's gifts.

I go to a multicultural, inclusive Catholic Parish where the priest is collaborative and I have been part of many ministries and taking leadership roles but I now feel called to take a quieter back seat, because I realise the system even there, being part of the bigger, hierarchical, centralised whole, requires radical change.

Our parish is an oasis in a desert but as the priest and I have discussed many times, his collaborative approach is at his discretion. If he were



moved we would be at the mercy of the new priest's view of parish life and he could close down everything, bar the Finance Committee which is enshrined in Canon Law. What does that say? As a woman who has perhaps got a vocation to priestly ministry, but can't test it out, and who did a Masters in Theology a few years ago and runs a Bereavement Service amongst other things, I know I have useful gifts to share with others, but not seemingly acceptable within the orthodox Catholic Church.

I am on the outside of the inside which is a creative place to be. I certainly don't want to put women priests into the hierarchical, clerical model of priestly ministry in the Roman Catholic church. I think your community, like the early Christian communities is the way forward. So, journey well and happily! The outside place becomes the centre...

Best wishes to you all

Pippa Bonner

Human Purpose



Albert Einstein 1879-1955 -- “A human being is part of a whole, called by us The Universe, a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings, as something separated from the rest – a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires, to affection for just a few persons nearest us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circles of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in all its beauty.”

HUMAN AWARENESS Mark A. Williams: Your Identity Zones: Who am I? Who are you? How do we get along? What happens if I push your buttons? Can we work together harmoniously?

During the hundreds of years it took to usher in the Industrial Revolution, people saw their lives change, their values reformulated, new ideas developed, new undreamt of experiences..... The same thing is happening today, only faster – telecommunications, biotechnology, nanotechnology. Today we are global: we have transcended and rendered obsolete old definitions of space and geography.

But the old questions still bother homo sapiens – Who am I? What’s the point of it all? What is she thinking? What makes him tick? Why did he act oddly when I said that?

This book argues for new ways to see how people function within and react to this new world of ours. It empowers us to personally and professionally navigate these new environments. It identifies, in this new era of perpetual change, an updated paradigm for understanding human relationships, decisions, emotions, reactions and sensitivities.

Your Identity Zones--

Affiliations are what we’re born into or enculturated into.... race, gender, marital status, religion, political affiliations, education, etc – your innate characteristics, your life choices, your life circumstances.

Values here refer to deeply held principles such as honesty, security, responsibility, patriotism, family, loyalty etc.

How strong are these Affiliations and Values? To work out where you or other persons stand on any one of these, there are SIX



categories of measurement, which can be rated from 1-10, or here less precisely into just three zones.

TEMPERATURE.....	Hot	Warm	Cold
CIRCLE OF INCLUSION....	Closed	Selective	Open
COMMITMENT.....	Activist	Engaged	Passive
STRATEGY.....	Transform	Reform	Conform
POWER.....	High	Medium	Low
PURPOSE.....	Self	Society	Soul

What happens when you start to rank some of your own Affiliations and Values on this grid?.....

I'm hot on Gender, she's closed on Race, he's engaged on Community Service, you're an activist on Political Affiliation, my perceived power on Religion is high.

*Did you notice there's no "good" or "bad" in this way of looking at things?

***Your next step is to set up a GRID to analyse yourself and others...**(It will look something like the grid at the bottom of this page).

There will be seven columns along the top (estimating the strength/intensity of a particular Affiliation or Value). In the column on the Left Hand Side, you list Affiliations and Values one under the other. (Rather than a value 1-10, you may choose to use the most appropriate word from the Grid above).

Jargon for more sophisticated analysis....

Heat Waves and Cold Fronts. Sometimes people cluster at the left or right side of the chart. A heat wave is someone who tends to the left side, not only hot, but closed, activist, transformational... someone who is extremely passionate and committed about a particular affiliation or value. Cold fronts tend towards the right hand side of the chart, with no strong feelings or no interest in engaging about a particular affiliation or value.

Zone Hotspots (Zots) are parts of your identity that you're extremely sensitive about. When someone touches your zots (presses your buttons), you get angry, hurt, frustrated, annoyed, afraid, defensive. Sensitivities and conflict can arise from anywhere within the zone chart.

Triggers, Red Flags, Blowouts. Triggers are jokes, offhand comments, workplace policies, political speeches – anything that inflames you and becomes a potential source of conflict. Red Flags are signs that a zone-based conflict is brewing. Blowouts are major zone-based conflicts – typically face-to-face arguments – with potentially damaging consequences.

The Multi-Self This analytical system is based on the notion that we (global society) are evolving towards the age of the multi-self, though some cultures are still primarily uni in their societal as well as individual views of identity. We can expect many swings of the pendulum, cycles of growth followed by cycles of fear and reversion. Adapt and move forward, or retrench and be left behind.

Patricia Byrne

GRID for analysis of self and others

<i>Affiliation/ Value</i>	<i>Temperature</i>	<i>Circle of Inclusion</i>	<i>Commitment</i>	<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Power</i>	<i>Purpose</i>

From the Clusters

Fairfield Cluster

Response to Survey Report

John Roberts

Scribe for Cluster Group

The report was discussed at the Cluster Group's meeting on 25th July 2011. Eight members attended. We noted that, wisely, the report was expressed objectively and not interpreted by the authors.

The group hopes that the report will be used as a guide by those making decisions for the community. It is noted that the responders were largely in the 55-75 year age range. Did this lack of response by younger members influence the outcomes? In spite of this the results are important. Themes seemed to be well covered.

What does the Community want?

We believe there was no real consensus. A significant number of people want to have some say in the decision making. Inclusiveness and acceptance seemed to be a desire. Spirituality seemed to be prominent in several replies. There seemed to be a lack of specificity as to what this meant in the context of the survey. (Eg meditation, prayer, teaching etc?) We thought it hard to legislate for spirituality as this is more a quality of each individual's response.

Leadership (Q9)

This seemed to prefer 1 Priest; 2 Elected Lay Leader;

3 Elected ex Priest as leader in that order of preference. A collegiate leadership – Priest and Lay Leader together seemed to be appreciated. (Other comments)

It would seem to us the themes are more important than the absolute numbers in this question. Pastoral care and the ease of accessing this is considered important to our group members.

Satisfaction (Q5)

The majority seemed to be satisfied to three levels of satisfaction. The dissatisfied group should not be ignored as addressing their concerns may be possible.

What would improve your satisfaction? (Q6)

Premises (building) seemed to rate highly (22%). This may be hard to arrange. Some members seemed to find a church building important. Our group was reminded that the word "Church" has three meanings: 1 The administrative structure (including the hierarchy); 2 the building; 3 The body of people (the Community). We have dislodged 1 (or they have dislodged it for us). We have temporary 2 which is certainly appreciated but does not have

the ambience of the traditional building we left. We do have Community which is arguably the most important. There is a specific need in the building which could be better – the provision of better space for the children.

Feelings on Leaving St Mary's compared with Feelings after a year? (Q3 & 4)

Initially: Anger, Grief, Frustration, Loyalty, Liberation were mixed with other feelings.

After one year: Anger, Grief & Loss had fallen; Liberation, Contentment, Enlightenment & Loyalty were more prominent.

John Roberts

This is a shortened version of the discussion. The full text can be obtained from John Roberts.

Northern Cluster

The Northern Cluster meets every third Thursday evening from 6.30-9pm. Sometimes we commence with an Agape and we always enjoy a shared meal at one of three regular host homes.

We usually have around 8-12 people present and build friendships during the meal,



Northern Cluster

after which we discuss a topic which one of the members brings. We are all invited to suggest any material which has inspired us and we decide on the night which course we will follow.

Our last discussion centred around the question of whether we are, in fact, an intentional Christian community and how broadly that is accepted by the St. Mary's community at large.



Some members of the Northern Cluster

The proposed Cluster Muster would seem to be a good opportunity for this and kindred subjects to be discussed.

Last month we bade a fond farewell to Narelle and

Richard Mullins, as they move away from the northside. We have been meeting in our present form for a few years and enjoy seeing the familiar faces from our Cluster at Mass.

Lynda Roberts

Who are you? Who am I ?

Continued from page 8

I was powerless to love, be good or loveable. I was, most definitely, unworthy, sinful and separated from everyone and everything.

Amazingly, the EXPERIENCE revealed to me the exact opposite: 'the Kingdom of heaven is within'. (Luke 17:21) – the truth is within.

We are all the love that we seek. We are goodness and innocence Itself, totally lovable, wise and beautiful. We are One. 'In God we live and move and have our being' (ACTS 17: 28) in happiness and completeness.

Belief in a separated self sees illusions. If we have real eyes we can realize the SELF is everywhere to be seen.

On her death bed Mercia (my sister) was animated with a

fresh understanding "We need do nothing -we never left God!" She also added that she had been worried about Mum and Dad. They lived ordinary lives. They never read the books we have. They didn't talk about God. Then she added with enthusiasm: "They didn't have to – they never left God!"

Mercia chose to have on her memorial card the words: "Silence – God is – all that is."

Barbara Fingleton

St Mary's Matters - Edition 27

*Editor - Margaret Ortiz
Finances - Doc Ortiz*

*Sub -editors -Jan Murray
Kerry White
Joan Mooney*

*Printed by John Hallett
Xavier Grafix*

Articles, advertising, letters, photos are always welcome. Send to margdoc2@gmail.com

*Cover picture by Cynthia of Jade Photography. See her work at www.jadephotography.com.au.
The cover was designed by Robyn from Micah Projects*

You are invited to contribute financially to the work of St Mary's Community in Exile by donating to:

St Mary's Community Ltd, BSB 064- 131 Account 10339414, Commonwealth Bank, West End.

The Trouble with St Mary's

23rd May 2011



Terry Fitzpatrick



Michael Leunig



Chris Perkins



Sam Watson



Peter Hegedus



Karyn Walsh



Peter and Kate



Ted and Katie



Peter and Kathleen

