



St Mary's Matters

St. Mary's in Exile

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Don Smith drew this cartoon for us many years ago. We reproduce it as a tribute to Don who died ten years ago.

Cover design

The back and front covers were designed by Jordan McGuire from Inkahoots. It is part of the new design portfolio he has created for our community. Here is what he has to say about the inspiration for his beautiful work.

From the Editor

Exciting times for our community. The design of our front cover is taken from a set of new images developed by Inkahoots. We thank them for the creativity of their design which reflects a community which is dynamic and colourful. You will see components of the design on our web page, e bulletin, brochures, our facebook page, our banner and name badges.

We have all been excited too by the great response to David Burton's play 'St Mary's in Exile'. A large number of the community went to see the play and the feedback has been very interesting. Some reflections on the play have been included in this edition of the magazine.

There is beautiful duo of Ingerid Meagher's poem 'Grief Transforming' and a piece by Sharon Ryan entitled 'Love and Fear'.

What splendid writers we have in our community.

Reflections after Watching ‘The Play’

St Mary’s in Exile performed by the Queensland Theatre Company



I must admit, there was apprehension in my heart, particularly as I sat beside my dear Dad, wondering how we would be portrayed – how Peter and Terry would be portrayed more to the point. I had heard and read such rubbish over the years! But as the (incredible) actors took their final bow, my heart swelled with such pride!

That was my community! That was our story! And it was GOOD!!! I would love to have seen it again, such wonderful production values. And Dad? Well, utilising the patented John Ellis system of review? “Ten outta ten!” High praise indeed

Kate Fanton

Re the ‘St Mary’s in Exile’ play, I thought it was brave, dramatic and honest portrayal of the (primary characteristics of) events that occurred in 2009, depicting in some way the personal journeys of many of us.

It reminded me of the futility of words sometimes, in attempts to resolve differences of opinion.

It also reminded me of the admirable goal of inner stillness, so in contrast with the busy and complex teachings of the Catholic church.

Each member of SMX would have their own lived and/or remembered experiences of the separation - for me, the play was a comfortable reminder of why we are “St Mary’s in Exile”.

Neil Wilson

Whilst I fully understand the fact that the playwright has added his own thoughts and interpretations to the true story that is the history of St Mary’s in Exile, there were parts that I, a long-time community member, found rather confronting and frankly unbelievable. I did not like the anger and the shouting on the part of the two main characters. I find it difficult to accept that such scenes happened in reality, but I do accept that David Burton may have wanted to add drama and conflict to the mix. It is beyond my imagination that Peter and Terry would have indulged in such behaviour in real life, so consequently I did not enjoy those parts!

As for the rest of the play, it was a tribute to all those responsible for its production as well as all those of the community who gave their input long before pen was put to paper.

Anon



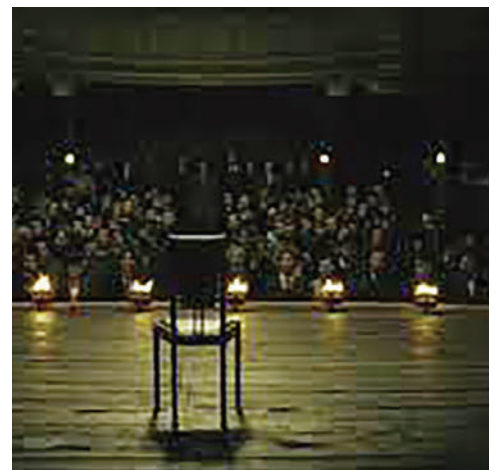
Life's Play

The play -
our friends' lives exposed on stage.
Actors wear the self, laid
bare. Fragments merge, rearrange.
Facts stretch, modify.
Angry voices cross-fire.

The play -
St Mary's undressed on stage.
Minds clash. Hearts search
for truth, shape the path.
Rome shouts. The door opens, wide.
They step outside.

The play
enters every life. A whisper
from the side of stage. Lay
the script and costume on the floor.
Walk freely, humbly
through the door.

Margaret Clifford



This Great Theatre

A Review for PK & TF

Little figure meditating quietly on your stage,
Engulfed by storm and fury,
Can you even hear yourself,
Breathe?

Little Buddha, this is no laughing matter.
Too much is at stake:
Home and exile,
Leading and following,
Conscience, obedience, and
Two millennia of learning, maybe more.

Little child,
You split in two,
Then three, keep separating, endlessly.
Do you know yourself any better?
These roles, these parts, this great theatre -
You learn the lines, rehearse, perform, pull it off,
Show after show, nightfall after nightfall, year after year,
Till all shows are one, all players merged once more.

Little ones,
(From the back rows we seem so small),
See the lights come on, the curtain, a darkened doorway.
We applaud rapturously, grateful,
Or shift in our seats, glad it is done.
Because there are flowers to sweep from altars,
Figurines to dust or replace,
Love to be made,
Gods to be sustained, liberated and created.

*SJ Cleary
October 2016*



The Play

Well, I absolutely loved the QTC production of St Mary's in Exile! Although I wondered if the ending could have been a more dramatic one - marching down Peel St!!!!

I have been attending St. Mary's for nearly thirty years now and I still return! How come? I have come to appreciate and respect the history of effort that has produced St. Mary's now in Exile.

Pierre de Chardin points to our purpose when he says, 'We are Spiritual Beings on a human journey'. Also the universal question, 'why are we here?' directs us towards an enhanced union with our God. I am here in spirit to continue a relationship with my God. The Australian spiritual teacher Leonard Jacobson puts it this way:

There is a world that exists within the world we know. It has existed in its perfect state from the very beginning of time.

It is an invisible world, waiting eternally to be discovered. It is God's world, Heaven on earth.

It is not a world of imagination. It is absolutely real, it is here now. It is hidden within the world you know, it is hidden within the world you live in.

And the doorway is within you, in a sense you are the doorway.

Does this sound like our true self, our spiritual self?

Throughout my attending St. Mary's I have been encouraged to continue my Spiritual Journey. Mainly I do this through a meditation practice of mindfulness attention to the external environment and my subjective experience. This is leading to a meditative lifestyle, (somewhat difficult in our busy, noisy household).

My journey has been affected by the book club cluster group (Scriptural study group) where we study modern theologians and historians who are revising and updating the history of the Judaeo-Christian movement. Two recent books of study are *Saving Jesus from the Church* by Robyn R Meyers and *Jesus Then Jesus Now* by Gregory C Jenks.

St Mary's continues to provide a number of pathways for those who wish to



follow their personal/spiritual journey; here is my recollection of some of them: social justice activities, social engagement activities, study of the liturgy and homilies, music, book club, cluster groups, meditation groups, the library. I have probably missed some. The ethos to educate and develop one's self seems to have been prevalent throughout the history of St. Mary's.

Jesus states that the Kingdom of God is within you between and all around you. Spiritual teachers tell us that God is the Silent Presence at the very heart of all things present. A sustained practice of meditation, paying attention, creates a deep silence awareness within. The doorway is within you. In a sense you are the doorway! Meditation is a prayerful way towards a union with your God.

In conclusion: Be still and know that the silence in you, your spirit, brings you to the Godliness in you.

Brian O'Hanlan

The play 'St Mary's in Exile', sensitively written by David Burton, portrays a community led by Peter Kennedy and Terry Fitzpatrick, living and practising Christian ideals and doing amazing social justice works.

It is a complex work where many issues are raised and questioned. A particular strength of the play was the constant battle of conscience that Peter had in dialogue with himself as the young Peter Kennedy. The nature of this dialogue was not revealed until late in the play.

Peter Kennedy, assisted by Terry, certainly come across as men who do act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly. They are men responding to the needs of a diverse community in the present democratic society in which we live. This forms a direct contrast to the outdated patriarchal hierarchy of the Catholic Church.

Cathy Polites



The Play

It's all about Stillness and Non-duality

On Wednesday 21st September I went to see the play, 'St Mary's in Exile' and I was very favourably impressed by the performance. When the actual events were taking place, I was following them from afar as Media news. It was powerful to be exposed to the raw emotions behind those media reports.

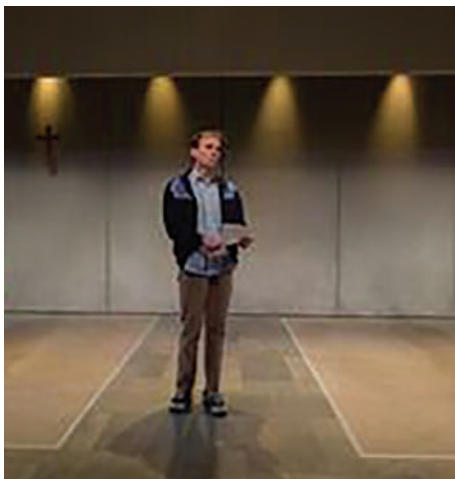
As the play progressed my focus was turned to Peter standing against the wall looking at the centre stage and gently proclaiming: 'It's all about Stillness and Non-duality'. This scene was wedged between scenes of confusion, conflicts between 'them and us' where even a little statue caused a dispute about its identity. For a whimsical few moments I felt I was watching an innocent comedy. However, the dialog was excellent, revealing the story of a vibrant community in trauma.

Before, during and after the play I was aware of the presence of love that accompanies my experience at SMX. Little wonder as Ken Leigh came to pick me up at Redcliffe and then his sister, Carlene. I was certainly in delightful loving company which was added to by familiar people from SMX.

It wasn't until the following Sunday 25th September that the play's impact reached its climax for me. The lights were dimmed at the centre stage at SMX and Terry was leading the community in singing: 'Be still and know that I am God'. It brought me back to "It's all about Stillness and Non-duality". The rest of the Liturgy was in alignment, beautifully unfolding the theme in the atmosphere of the presence of love and our oneness.

In his homily Terry reminded us of the hustle and bustle that can engross us so much that it brings us out of the awareness of stillness – our true abode. We were encouraged to take the means to return to the presence of inner stillness and value being in that space within, no matter what appears on our screen. After all: "It's all about stillness and non-duality".

Barbara Fingleton



I loved the play. I felt really proud of our two protagonists as they struggled with all the difficulties and challenges. I felt really proud to be in the audience as part of the community. I thought the turning point of Peter's younger self being identified really focused the play. I enjoyed the humour and I thought the acting from all players was terrific.

I think the only aspect I didn't like was the degree of argument and anger that was portrayed - while I'm sure there would have been a degree of that in the real situation, I believe our major players handled a real crisis with great maturity - there was angst, but anger was never obvious. So I was sad that this portrayal might have given non-SMX people a distorted and "lesser" view of our well-loved leaders and our community.

Kerry Lawrence



We went to the matinee on Saturday with Keith. It was a full house and the staff said demand had exceeded availability. The audience appeared to be enjoying the play a great deal.

Afterwards, while waiting outside the theatre to be collected, the men were joined by the actors. Other theatregoers joined them. There was a great deal of praise for the actors playing Peter and Terry. It was felt that they had demonstrated a real understanding of the two men.

Our experience of the exile only began a few weeks before the move so we were not familiar with the earlier part of the story. Despite this we felt that there was too much emphasis on Terry's 'extra curricula' activities. It was not particularly pertinent. It is not something we discuss in the community, as we don't really see that the private lives of our leaders are our business. However we do have compassion for priests who are expected to live unnatural celibate lives. The contribution of this lifestyle to the mess in the church is accepted by many people.

However we did enjoy the play and were very pleased we went.

Shirley and Lew

The SMX play: an act to follow

They applauded with enthusiasm
The play a success
Peter Kennedy out there on stage
The actor true to his life
A once young eager man
Called to the priesthood
Full of dreams and passion
Jail exposure ephiphany
Appointed to St Mary's
Became a man of the people
Designed new liturgies
Forward thinker
Beyond Church boundaries
Social justice agenda
Compassion for all people
Excommunicated by those
Shackled to the old ways
Founded a new church
A new way forward
A church of renewal
A breath of life
For our times



Anne Maguire [9/10/16]

The God Within

I have always loved the story of the little boy who was sitting in his bedroom and drawing on a piece of paper. His mother walks in and says: "So what are you drawing?" He replies: "I'm drawing a picture of God." His mother says: "But no-one knows what God looks like." And he responds: "Oh, but they will by the time I'm finished." I would like to propose to you that if that little boy were to draw God, he would draw a picture of himself. He just needs to look in the mirror.

When I hear of the God in the Gospel and in our everyday narrative, I have always wondered who this God might be. Maybe it's not something I'm meant to even think about, but I like to think about things like this. For example, I read recently that astronomers have revised their calculations on the number of galaxies in the universe. They used to maintain there were about 200 billion, which is an overwhelming number in itself. Yet it has now been determined that there are ten times more galaxies than before. These astronomers have conjectured that there are about two trillion galaxies out there. Maybe that's God.



There are about two trillion galaxies out there. Maybe that's God.

Throughout theological history, there have been many different interpretations on who God might be. I'm becoming more and more convinced that while God is the very Universe itself, perhaps paradoxically, your God is deep within you. In essence, you are the God. Maybe this paradox between the Universe and you was what William Blake was talking about when he wrote: To see a World in a Grain of Sand And a Heaven in a Wild Flower, Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand. And Eternity in an hour.

So how do you discover this inner 'God'? I believe that you become this God when you see everything as if it is for the very first time, right in that present moment.

It's when you open your eyes and your soul to the wonder and joy of life. For an example, watch a small child listening to a seashell for the first time. "Wow" ... she says, with a look of awe on her face, "listen to the waves. Isn't that amazing?!" Children have already discovered their God.

Then what's the adult version of this Wow? Perhaps it's when you do an activity for the 100th time, and yet you see it for the 1st time. It's when you walk through that door today for the 100th time, and yet today you still went wow. Look at this room. What a joy to be here. What amazing people. And in that precious moment, you find that you are present. You are present. You are present. And it's right there that you connect with your inner God.

There is even some scientific validity to this approach of being present with everything as if for the first time. I would contend that science, psychology and religion have often converged through human history. One example is the psychological state of what we call FLOW, in which you engage in a heightened experience. To me, this is the Godstate. Some refer to it as being in the 'zone'. These events can sometimes be the peak experiences in your life, and yet they also can happen during normal everyday activities.

Where have you experienced your version of Flow? When you spent time finetuning a beautiful piece of machinery? When you looked at a seed in the palm of your hand, and you saw the forest? When you were writing a story, and the words came from somewhere else? Perhaps even when you met with another God here today? Whenever and however this Flow happened for you, in that quintessential present moment, I believe that you found your God.

Can I please offer a final point about your Godstate? This beautiful imperfect world of ours could be astonishing up ahead. But it will need each and every one of us to focus within, and connect with the God of our own amazing capabilities. Don't believe the doomsayers and the powerbrokers who would rather exert a fear-based control from the outside-in. They too often seek to scare us into submission by generating fear about



the future. That's an outmoded control mechanism that has been used for 1000s of years, and we're too good for that now. There are many amazing things happening right now around this glorious planet, and there are many more to come.

Just imagine the world we could create with our inner God. But it will take every one of us, as Marianne Williamson wrote, to realize that our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, 'Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?' Actually, who are you not to be?

Tony Ryan



About the author

Tony Ryan is an educational consultant and writer, and offers professional support to school organisations throughout the world on issues such as the future of schooling, digital pedagogies, and educator welfare.

Tony is the author of the Thinkers Keys, The Ripple Effect, Mindlinks, Wrapped In Living and a series of manuals and workbooks that stimulate innovative thinking in classrooms. He has worked with over 1000 schools in 8 countries in the past 15 years, and is the founder of School2School, an organisation that encourages first world schools to support schools in less developed countries.

Love and Fear

*There are only two feelings - Love and Fear
There are only two languages - Love and Fear
There are only two activities - Love and Fear
There are only two motives, two
procedures, two frameworks, two results
Love and Fear, Love and Fear*

Michael Leunig

Life has lately challenged me to reflect on many things, with love and fear being prominent themes – especially when pain comes to visit. We all know, and are visited by pain at different times in our life. It's a universal experience. Paradoxically, it's also a very individual and lonely one, as we all feel pain in our own unique ways.

For most of us the instinctive response to pain is **fear**, linked to an attempt to make our pain **go away**. Sometimes that is exactly what is required. Like a small child exploring her world who grabs something hot and is prompted by pain to let it go.

Often though our pain is of a different nature, and in our attempts to chase it away, we end up doing ourselves more harm than good. We try to diminish or distract ourselves from their pain and fear. By doing this we run a risk of falling into a hole that becomes increasingly hard to clamber out of.

A Buddhist story provides us with lessons for life using the image of a hole in the street.

I walk down the street. There is a deep hole. I fall in. I am lost... I am helpless. It isn't my fault. It takes forever to find a way out.

I walk down the same street. There is a deep hole. I pretend I don't see it. I fall in again. I can't believe it. But, it isn't my fault and it still takes me a long time to get out.

I walk down the same street. There is a deep hole. I see it is there. I still fall in. It's a habit. My eyes are open. I know where I am and that it is my fault. I get out immediately.

I walk down the same street. There is a deep hole. I walk around it. I walk down another street.

Like the character in this story we need to learn to walk down another street – to respond to our pain in a way driven by love not fear. The first step in this challenging task is to get to know our pain and fear so we don't keep falling into the same old hole over and over again. Pain wearies us and fear is a powerful adversary, which may pounce like a hungry tiger, or quietly and stealthily grow stronger until we buckle under the pressure.

Before we find another street on which to walk, we need to be aware of how our fear controls us so we can be calm and still when it arrives. So we can acknowledge it's presence saying, "Ahh... here you are again" and wait quietly, observing and learning as we remind ourselves that this is what it is, and it too will pass.

Uncovering what Michael White (an Australian Psychotherapist) calls the 'fierce friends' our fear brings with it (worry, self-doubt and criticism... to name just a few) will help us prepare for their visits. Then we can stop feeding them and making them stronger with our undivided attention. Instead we can say 'Stop, enough. I have a different focus now.'

Then we'll be ready to walk down that other street by recognising that when pain comes, it is an invitation to care for ourselves gently and to respond in ways driven by love. These are the times to allow love's "loyal legions" (kindness, generosity, courage and hope) into our hearts and minds. To deal with our pain in ways that ultimately make us stronger.

As David Benner teaches us, 'It is not the fact of being loved that is life changing. It is the experience of allowing ourselves to be loved'. When we're willing to love ourselves, and are open to and accepting of being loved by others, we become more whole, are more connected and experience greater wellness and peace.

The story of the hole reminds us that finding another street is no quick and easy task. We may search long and hard and feel as if we're making no progress, but this may be because we're not noticing small changes along the way.

I once worked with a young man in considerable pain following the break-up of a relationship with a woman he believed to be his soulmate. Through the months I saw him he often spoke of giving up hope. Then one day he arrived appearing lighter in spirit and explained, "You kept telling me that things would change and recently I realised I was waiting for a big light bulb moment and feeling really disappointed this hadn't happened. I also realised that little changes have been happening all the along the way and that I am starting to feel better.

In order to find our new street we, like this young man, need to keep taking one small step after another and somehow maintain hope, especially when life hurts. As Emily Dickinson encourages us with her beautiful poem :

*Hope is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul
And sings the tune without the words
And never stops at all*

Sharon Ryan

Sharon has been a member of our community for many years.





Grief Transforming



This life,
a quaver in an exquisite melody,
for a brief moment in time augmented by love,
given substance,
recognized,
elevated to joyous expression,
an arching tie holding the melody suspended.

This life,
splashed with patches of grief,
here, there, everywhere,
connecting, disconnecting,
bleeding from fiber into fiber,
coloring,
discoloring the fabric that clothes
the substance of being,
old and new garments connecting.

This life, this note, this quaver
through sorrow diminished.

This life,
molding anew,
sculpting, twisting, turning,
smoothing away old features,
now freed from illusion,
merging into truth,
into potentiality
that bridges the gap from emptiness
into something-ness,
into fullness.

This life through sorrow augmented.

Ingerid Meagher (Oct 2016)

Challenging Indifference - a visit to India



*Right: Children at the school well.
There is no toilet block at this school*

To describe our experience of India in one word would be to say that it was 'intense', in every way. A submersion into suffering. Unintentionally it also became a Buddhist pilgrimage. The life story of Buddha filled our experiences. We sat under the Bodhi tree at the ancient Mahabodhi Temple as Siddhārtha did, and yes we became enlightened, in Indian ways, but we did not attain enlightenment.

We saw Varanasi is the spiritual capital of India and filled with Hindu pilgrims, many bathing in the sacred Ganges river, or performing funeral rites and cremations, and yes we were 'ashed on' by the pyres on the Ganga ghats, however we were moved greatly when witnessing an

infant's body floating in its waters. The Old Testament story of a baby afloat in a reed basket came to mind, however that baby was rescued.

We saw schools and orphanages, all lacking the most basic necessities. The students at the well, pictured above, are at a school at Sujata, which is without a toilet block for staff or students.

Summarising this experience is best done by paraphrasing some words of the author and Buddhist teacher, Sharon Salzberg:

We were moved by transformational experiences

beyond mistaken concepts'

We touched the reality of dying and rebirth,

of ourselves and all of life.

We have just begun to know how to listen to suffering;

and if we can listen to suffering we can also listen to happiness,

a happiness that comes from challenging 'indifference' towards one's neighbour and to gain the realisation that,

when our own hearts are burning warmly another's heart is kindled by it.

*John FitzWalter
Adapted from his homily*



India - physical suffering

First thing that hits me

Arriving back at Brisbane airport

Is how clean the air is

How quiet the street

How blue the sky

How clean the surrounds

It's as if I've been living under a veil all these years in clean Australia

The drive through Bohdgaya, this city of two million has to be experienced to be believed - all my senses are ablaze - the death-defying drive dodging potholes and oncoming buses, trucks, bicycles, people, cows and dogs - thick pungent smell of cow-manure and burning coal making morning chai - rubbish piled and burning by roadsides - people living in squalor and going about their lives regardless. The air rings incessantly with blaring horns. Every now and then you hear the mesmerising sound of Curlews and see the beautiful faces of smiling children.

I suddenly think about the swollen baby floating down the Ganges yesterday morning.

Our response is to share our wealth to help relieve the distress of poverty - to contribute to the operating costs of schools for the poor, not buy water filters and food and school uniforms for children in orphanages but to buy water pumps and sewing machines for women in villages, to pay for medicines, to raise funds to build toilets in village schools.

Friends at home - internal suffering

Second week home I encounter the suffering of my friends

There - people suffered poverty, but here, people who are wealthy by comparison suffer internally. Their pain is real, their unhappiness palpable.

Our response is to give time to our friends - to truly listen and sympathise - to take them out to dinner - to truly care and give them our time.

Forgiving is magical - it is powerful, liberating, and frees us to love with an open heart!

Reflecting on the trip - I realise that to contribute to caring for this planet, people living in poverty, and my family and friends I need to look after myself - to maintain a quiet discipline of morning and evening yoga and meditation, to eat well

and exercise, to have time to do what I love and have affection for, to spend time in relationship with family and friends, to commit to community with others and their spiritual growth and development - to keep myself resilient.

Michael Tansky

Adapted from his homily to the St Mary's congregation.



Still Strong

I look into the lines of her face

What suffering has she endured?

Hair grey

Forehead furrowed like imprinted bricks indented above eyes

Telling a story held deeply within

I try to imagine but no imagining comes near her reality

Heavy burdens she carried

Pain and deprivation she endured

She knows the taste of hunger

Smell of death

Sickness and loss

Woven into her features

Fearless her fabric

Oozing strength

Heavy-lidded dark eyes downward cast

Nose straight and strong

Lips closed

Chin buckled

Cheeks high

Still Strong

Michael Tansky

Inspired by Darjeeling artist Ava Devi's painting by the same title

What People are Reading



Saving Jesus from the Church by Robyn R Meyers

09 Mar 2010

HarperCollins Publishers Inc

Saving Jesus from the Church is a well-argued expression of Peter Kennedy's dictum, "What you do is more important than what you believe".

The St Mary's Scriptural Study Group, (book club), is currently reading 'Saving Jesus from the Church: How to Stop Worshipping Christ and Start Following Jesus' by Robyn R Meyers. This is a great book for Progressive Christians. Meyers challenges dogma and points to its absurdity. With Augustine's very influential non-biblical notion of Original Sin for example he notes that, new young parents not only bring home from hospital a beautiful bundle of joy but also a bundle of sin-havens !!!

Myers basic principles are simple; 1) I am a 'follower of Jesus'; 2) Jesus message was 'be compassionate'.

Myers' also raises an interesting translation issue when he writes; "In Britain to this day the word 'believer' is synonymous with the word 'Christian'. In John 3:16 we read, 'For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life'. The problem is that the original meaning of the word translated as 'believes' is lost. At this time the word believe is synonymous with faith. Marcus Borg reminds us that there are four meanings of the word 'faith' in the history of Christianity and only one of them 'assensus' has anything to do with intellectual assent, or faith as a head trip. This idea developed after the reformation when the meaning of orthodoxy shifted from correct worship to right belief and continued to grow in urgency after modern science



challenged the biblical world view. Only in the past two hundred years has faith come to mean believing things that are increasingly easy to disprove.

What has been lost in our time are the other three meanings of the word 'faith'. These words are faith as 'fiducia' (radical trust in God), as 'fidditas' (loyalty in one's relationship to God), and 'visio' (a way of seeing creation as gracious).

These words and their understanding to different degrees, imply that faith and belief are more a way of "being with" or "attending to" God and others, than a set of ideas in one's head.

Jesus' message was 'be compassionate' and we are commanded to go and do like wise; not go and talk likewise or go and believe likewise. What does this mean?

Our own poet in residence Margaret Clifford has written a wonderful poem titled 'Compassion' - here it is:

*To be compassionate is to be fully awake,
attuned to who we are*

*To be compassionate is to allow our sense
of separateness to crumble*

*To be compassionate is to stand beside
and help lever rocks so that justice can
trickle in*

*To be compassionate is to be a mid wife
for there is no other way God can be born.*

I recommend this book. It sits well with what we are espousing at St Mary's. It gives authority to our moving away from orthodoxy to orthopraxis. And it is so very readable.

Brian O'Hanlon

A Course of Love

Mari Perron, first Receiver

St Paul, Minnesota

WWW.takeheartpublications.com

This is a premature introduction to a book that I have only read sixty four of its 674 pages. I am so delighting in it that I wanted to share about it in time for this magazine's publication

The name of the book alone was enough to ignite my interest. I can easily read a short chapter allowing myself a lot of time to stop and absorb its magic. Peace and joy seem to magically pervade the pages. Zeal for the love that is intimately connected to oneness, union/communion and wholeness. The author helps us recognise when any thoughts, feelings and actions that are negative or hint at separation arise in the mind, and she zealously stills the mind with the truth of love.

I feel that the best way that I can share this book is to quote at random from the chapters I have read.

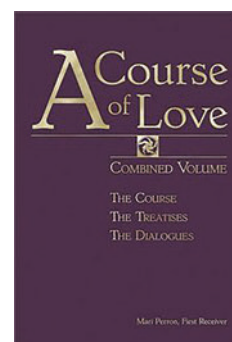
God's only thought is a thought of love. It is a thought without limit, endlessly creating. Because of the extension of God's thought of love, you exist.

Your real Self is the Christ in you. How could it be anything but love, or seen with eyes other than love?

Love is. It teaches by being what it is. It does not do anything. It does not strive. It neither succeeds nor fails. And thus it always was and always will be. It is not particular to you as human beings. It is in relationship with everything. All is all.

I heartily recommend this book. The above is just a small taste - seek the rest for yourself.

Barbara Fingleton



Globalization

My daughter recently got involved in an argument about globalization. Showing wisdom beyond her years, she did not say much. Later she asked me, “Dad, what is globalization?” This was not such a clever move, because it gave me the opportunity for a large volume of pontification:-

Because of the increasing ease and speed of international trade and communication, the world is losing its diversity and becoming just one big planet.

This has a few major aspects. One is cultural/sporting/entertainment. For example the Estonians don’t wear their national costume to work every day. They only wear it on National Day, and the rest of the time they dress like us. The shopping mall near my office, when I was in Yokohama, could easily have been on the Gold Coast, except that there was more Japanese writing on the signs than there would be in Pacific Fair. Many of the brands were the same. In Australia, we hardly notice this, because our culture is part of the US/English one that is taking over. I have asked a couple of Japanese about this, and, surprisingly, they don’t seem bothered. Maybe because our culture came with a big increase in affluence, and they see it as all part of the one thing. But the Islamic world is clearly not happy.

A really weird example of this was a few weeks ago, when I was watching a recorded British police show on TV, and the policeman was out at a farm, asking questions. I stopped the play, just to be sure, and the Welsh farmer was wearing an old Brumbies (Canberra) rugby jersey!

This process of globalization has been happening for the last 150 years, driven by advances in technology, and is well advanced. Whether people like it or not, it is too late to try to stop it. People won’t go back to communicating by letter, and Qataris won’t go back to buying their groceries in traditional Arab souks.

Another major aspect is financial/political/crime. For firms like mine, involved in our small way in export, the world is our marketplace. Language is a problem, a bigger problem is the different



countries having their own regulations and currencies, but we can still export some of our output. This aspect of globalization also tends to make everyone more the same, so we become less affluent, and the Chinese become more affluent. No one likes to become less affluent, and so those who have become or might become less affluent are not happy.

Added to this is the fact that global finance has pretty much completed the transition, and is seamlessly global, while the political structures are lagging far behind. Many governments try to distribute the wealth a bit, but because there are 170 of them with little co-operation, they are easily out-manoeuvred by global companies and banks.

So people are protesting, mainly that they want imports to their countries banned or saddled with heavy government duties. If Australia put 100% import tax on all cars, our car making industry would be viable again, and Ford and Toyota would open new factories. The trouble with this is that would increase costs for many businesses such as mine, we would have to put our prices up, and we might lose some of our overseas markets. So the important issue would be not so much producing a good product efficiently, but how much you could get your government to subsidise you, or tax or regulate your opposition.

Of course, this is all very simplistic, but people normally think only one step ahead. Globalization has taken away my job as a car seat assembler, and I want it back.

Leaving the most important to last, people can move around much more easily than they used to. This is a controversial issue now, but as tens of millions of people are displaced by climate change into an overcrowded world, I can see it becoming the major issue in twenty or thirty years time. My generation has messed up on climate change, so I will leave the next generation to sort that one out. It is certainly solvable, but will require wisdom and good will.

The technology that has caused globalization will not go away. The genie has been let out of the bottle, and might be a good or a bad thing, but she won’t go back in.

Peter Brown

House of Cards

It wasn't according to my expectations
it rarely is
but this time
I thought I had
a good hand,
well, a hand
at least suitable
yes - comfortably suitable



But a pack of cards
no matter how carefully stacked
takes its own
unpredictable course



A hand unfurled
- trumped -
and I have lost
we have all lost
the world has lost



Democracy
forged in Greece and Rome
become decadent
by means of a card
a Trump card-
trumping decency
morality, compassion



Mr President-Elect
I'd like to ask -
In our globalised world



is not universal greatness
greater than
specifically American greatness?
In what,
from your presidential perspective,
does this gathering of greatness consist,
and for whom?

For you it is easy.
Already greatly wealthy
you have had greatness thrust upon
you,
your hand favoured
with a Trump card

- In your presidency
just who will be great?
Will the greatness of
fairness, prosperity, environmental care
extend beyond
your own wealthy,
powerful, privileged class?
The test of a card

Is not merely a stroke of luck
but its capacity to produce
Mr President,
Can your Trump card
Deliver the winnings
of Justice, liberty
Moral greatness?

Joan Mooney

Sonnet #2

When agitated thoughts unbounded dart
And my disconnected soul anxious drifts
In the cavity of my brooding heart;
And when my brain fills with whys and what ifs
And sorrow swells, and my soul trembling lists
Labour'ng against the prevailing airs,
I'll remember when my lips you kissed
Until I kiss'd back without doubt or fears.
And if, in future times, the good turns sour
And vagrant fear in lying dress returns
In envy of love's authentic power,
This image of you in my brain will burn:
This warm face in my hands I hold I'll see
And grateful of your heart forever be.



Radical Acceptance

Vale Terry O'Dea

This is a reflection about Radical Acceptance. About letting go into life. In order to illustrate this I would like to share a little about Terry O'Dea, a long term member of our community who died recently.

Terry was a great teller and sharer of jokes. One he told with me last year and I would like to share with you in honour of Terry.

"A man goes into a doctor's office feeling a little ill. The doctor checks him over and says, 'Sorry I have some bad news, you have 'Yellow 24' a really nasty virus. It's called 'Yellow 24' because it turns your blood yellow and you usually have only 24 hours to live. There's no known cure so just go home and enjoy your final precious moments on earth.'

So he trudges home to his wife and breaks the news. Distraught, she asked him to go to the bingo with her that evening as he's never been there with her before and had always promised that he would.

They arrive at the bingo and with his first card he gets four corners and wins \$35. Then with the same card he gets a line and wins \$320. And then he gets the full house and wins \$5000. Then the National Game comes up and he wins that too, getting \$780,000.

The bingo caller gets him up on stage and says, 'Son, I been here 20 years and have never seen anyone win four corners, a line, the full- house and the national game on the same card. You must be the luckiest man on Earth!

'Lucky!' he screamed. 'Lucky, I will have you know I've got Yellow 24!'

'I'll be blowed,' says the bingo caller. 'You've won the meat raffle as well!!!'

Thanks Terry, we will miss your jokes.

Terry and his wife Julie have been members of our community for 13 years since their move from Rockhampton. For the last nine years Terry has been living with cancer, which started in the bowel and moved to the liver and beyond. Throughout the nine years Terry embraced the cancer with an inspiring equanimity and peace despite the many trips to hospital with episodes of chemo and radium. Like most things in his life Terry embraced the cancer, as one of his daughters who spoke at the funeral remarked, as a sort of an adventure. Something to be curious about, to be caught up in its many twists and turns. I believe the poem by the 13th century Persian poet, Rumi, captures beautifully some of the way Terry embraced his cancer: as another guest in a guesthouse.

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're a crowd of sorrows,
who violently sweep your house
empty of its furniture,*

*still treat each guest honorably.
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.*

The youngest daughter of Julie and Terry, Colleen, related that mum and dad had a saying on their wall at home that says,

"How well did you live?

How well did you love?

How well did you learn to let go?"

Terry learned to do all three well throughout his life but in particular during his final years of living with cancer.

I had the good fortune of spending some good quality time with Terry and Julie a week before Terry passed away. He spoke of his being totally at peace with dying and that whatever lay ahead of him before his death he avowed that he was determined to live every moment he had left. Despite his being on his death bed the week prior, he declared to me that he would be taking his beloved caravan to Byron Bay to honor a promise to be at his eight-year-old grandson Ronan's birthday.

While at Byron Bay they went to the beach and within a minute of them arriving a whale appeared closer to the beach than anyone could remember. It frolicked, breached, slapped its tail and just as it moved past it lifted one gigantic flipper and waved. As Bridget his daughter exclaimed, 'a grace filled moment of farewell for a wonderful grace filled man'.

Within days Terry was gone, but his legacy of meeting his many unwelcomed cancer guests at the door laughing, and of how to live a life of letting go lingers long.

Terry Fitzpatrick



SMX Moving Forward

Terry's Perspective

Terry is the spiritual leader of the community and sits on both the Board and the Faith Council.

This year I would like to start with what I finished with last year. A story which has become for us a well-known parable, *The Hut*, with a different ending.

It was a time for the travellers to move out from the safety of the hut. The hut they were in was familiar and well-lit, but they knew that it could no longer serve them. It was time to venture out into dark and unfamiliar terrain, to seek out a new place of life. As they moved away from the hut, the light its windows cast on the world outside grew dim, until there was very little to guide them. They had to move along tentatively. The directions they decided on were often mistaken and they had to rely on each other for any progress they made.

Not all shared the same feelings about what they were undertaking. Where one grew frustrated, another continued to trust. Where one took heart from the adventure, another started to turn back to the light of the hut. It was a strange and unprecedented situation for them all. The only ones who knew where they were going were the ones who turned back, for they were turning to light and familiarity.

But anyone embracing the future did not have ready-made answers to questions from another age. Those who embraced the future were grounded in that ever loving presence that is not easily named and defined, boxed and packaged. These embracers of the future had experienced and known, felt and trusted this presence over many years. In this presence there is no us and them, no convenient separation. It was the dream of Jesus, the reign of God he spoke much

about, ever present and close at hand. It infused everything, and it was something to sell everything for. Resting in this presence they moved forward with a quiet confidence that Julian of Norwich the 14th Century English Christian mystic expressed many years ago, "All shall be well, and all shall be well and all manner of thing shall be well."

When we started on this journey we called ourselves St Marys In Exile, a name we chose again recently and voted on unanimously to describe who we are.

A name given by David Burton to the play recently performed so professionally here in Brisbane just around the corner.

To be in **exile** is a place where prophets, sages and gurus, poets and artists of all cultures and traditions have chosen to be. On the edge and not in the centre. For from the edge we can see differently. On the edge we are invited not to be immersed and blinded by being in the midst.

We are part of the great and long tradition of marginal communities speaking truth or being truth to the 'powers that be' at the centre. Is this what some aspects of the early church was to the Roman Empire? Or Jesus to the authorities both political and religious at the time. Or a misunderstood St Francis to people of Assisi. Or an exiled Dali Lama to China and a materialistic world lost in a consumeristic haze. Or a jailed Nelson Mandela to a divided, apartheid South Africa.

The challenge to be on the edge and exiled is not always easy. Being misunderstood and ridiculed can have its toll.

Therefore the opportunity to be affirmed this year was welcomed with open arms in the production of the play written by David

Burton and produced by Jason Klarwein and the Queensland Theatre Company. The play was an opportunity to retell our story to a new audience in a new way. The play delighted, bewildered and disappointed, challenged and encouraged, a bit of what happened seven years ago when we left the safety of the Roman Catholic Church to a place of Exile. We are grateful to David and the Queensland Theatre Company for thinking our story was worth telling.

We have been fortunate for the last seven years to have been in the upper room of the TLC Building and to have had a good friend in the Union Movement who continue to offer us hospitality. We are grateful to Ros McLennan the president of the Queensland Council of Unions for her generous support and the continuous support of all the Unions.

Those times when we have not been able to use the TLC Building for our liturgies this year we have been able to go to the beautiful Brookfield Spirituality Centre. Heather and David Eckersley, as caretakers of the Centre and members of our community have provided a wonderful link with the Centre. We have been grateful for the hospitality and welcome they have always shown us through-out the year.

Our links with Micah Projects and all the wonderful work of Micah continues to be a great source of pride for our community. Micah continue to host our office and provide much needed administrative assistance throughout the week.

This year we have enjoyed our increasing links with the Queensland Community Alliance and the many value based organisations that form this Alliance.

Many of us have known one another a long time and those not so long, but for all we have shared the good and not so good times together. There are many moments we share together that we could take for granted.

There are so many people who contribute to making our community an inclusive welcoming place and who keep the day to day running of the company working smoothly. We are grateful to them all.

Terry Fitzpatrick



SMX Board members: Jenny Ryan, Doc Ortiz, Paul Roberts, Terry Fitzpatrick, Jay Keys, Annie /colett, Michael Kelly, Roger Collins-/ woolcock, Zoe Walsh, Neil Wilson (Chairman)

SMX Moving Forward

Neil's perspective

Neil is the Chair of the board of St Mary's in Exile Ltd

Each one of us will look back on the past year at St Marys through their own prism, and recall their own highlights - for me, these were singing along with 'Scattered People' at Brookfield, and the play.

From the Board's perspective, its successes this year can be summarised under the five objectives of its Strategic Plan.

The first objective is Sustainability, illustrated by leadership, succession planning, and promotion.

Firstly, Leadership - we use a shared leadership model comprising the Board, the Community Faith Council (CFC), and all volunteers.

Secondly, Succession Planning - we have reviewed the roles and responsibilities of the Board, the CFC, leaders and volunteers, and of the music and communications functions, to confirm what jobs are required for different parts of the organisation.

Thirdly, Promotions - "Branding" was undertaken to create a unified visual identity, which is evident on brochures, banners, business cards, T-shirts, Mass Sheets, Facebook, e-News, and any administration documents.

Regarding the Queensland Theatre Company's play, it was an outstanding success, having a sell-out season of four weeks performing to packed houses.

Some of the associated media events included:-

ABC radio - playwright David Burton interviewed;

The Australian Review's Pick of the Week, and featured in the Courier Mail and Sunday Mail Arts Sections;

Articles in the Brisbane Times and the Brisbane News;

A "popup" performance held at the Queensland Art Gallery, with Peter Kennedy interviewed.

An interview held with Peter Kennedy by QPAC's Professor Judith McLean.

On one level, the outcome of all this has been a marked increase in website

inquiries and requests to know more about SMX.

On another level, we are currently examining ways in which our community can further benefit from the extensive media exposure.

The second objective in the Strategic Plan is Spirituality - interpreted as celebrating shared values, beliefs and spiritual practice grounded in Gospel values. This objective is primarily met through the liturgies held at the TLC building and at the Brookfield Spirituality Centre (still attracting 250-300 per week), CFC meetings and actions, and regular practice of meditation and conduct of retreats.

The third objective is Social Justice, which seeks to uphold social justice as the prime focus and commitment of SMX. In this regard, Micah is recognised as our primary partner and we continue to seek to promote and strengthen this relationship.

There is evidence of SMX's profile as a social justice advocate, in the number of approaches made by others to promote their activities through SMX.

The aim of the fourth Strategic Plan objective - Community is to foster and grow an inclusive faith community. Examples of how to do this include the Pastoral Care forum held by the CFC, calls for 'Welcomers' to attend at commencement of services; and the invitation to attend the 'Liturgy of Tea and Coffee' at various venues.

The fifth and last objective of the Strategic Plan is Integrity, characterised by ensuring integrity in governance, including

planning, financial management, administration and communications. Specific examples include:-

A new music system was purchased to improve sound quality and safety;

A call was made for increased contributions, resulting in an improved financial situation;

An assessment of any risks involved in SMX activities was produced and is reviewed monthly, with actions in progress;

An 'Anti-discrimination and Harassment Policy' was introduced;

A 'Process for Dealing with Concerns and Conflicts Policy' was introduced;

E-News - a new streamlined design was introduced, with a team of volunteers in training;

Four editions of 'St Marys Matters' were published;

There is a database of 1200 e-news recipients, having reach across Australia and overseas.

In conclusion, I'd like to acknowledge the contribution - not only of retiring Board members Kate Flamsteed and Margaret Wheat - but of all the time and effort volunteered by all of the SMX community - whether it's visiting someone who's ill or needing companionship, assisting with SMX services, or being a member of the CFC or Board, you all help maintain the guiding principles of SMX - acting justly, loving tenderly and walking humbly in this world.

Neil Wilson

Board Chair - St Mary's Community Ltd



Kathleen celebrates her ninetieth birthday with a cake made by Dorothy.

SMX Moving Forward

Brian's Perspective

Brian was the chairman of the Faith Council in this period.

The members of the Community Faith Council for the period from July 15-June 16 were Pam Krueger, Andrew Kennelly, Terry Fitzpatrick, Brian O'Hanlon, Maureen Hennigan, Margaret Lawson, Marg Ortiz and Margaret Clifford.

The Terms of Reference for St. Mary's in Exile Community Faith Council that were adopted in 2013 continue to provide the framework for the Council's role and responsibilities. Meetings were conducted on a monthly basis, with additional meetings as required and some issues were discussed via email. Brief reports of meetings were included in the Community Bulletin.

In July 2015 we found a number of outstanding issues referring to past correspondence that had been forwarded to Peter and Terry around the time of the formation in 2013 of the Community Faith Council and some even prior to the Council. After discussions with the interested parties the outstanding correspondence was dealt with to the satisfaction of the members concerned.

There commenced early in the year discussion on the role of Pastoral Care in the community. Eventually this discussion lead to Andrew Kennelly's paper on Pastoral Care: 'In house and Out ofhouse Pastoral Care' as a precursor for the Forum on Pastoral Care which was held later in the year. The report from this forum is pasted on the web site.

Throughout the year we were involved in Council discussion about David Burton's play and the Queensland Theatre Company's production of 'St Mary's in Exile'. A very successful season of David's play has recently been completed.

The Board and Council conducted two joint meetings during the year. Both meetings focused on ways the Council could assist the Board in clarifying and developing the St. Mary's in Exile strategic five year plan and introduced the Council to the newly formed Communications Committee. Subsequently the Council had discussions with Terry regarding ways he could be supported in his role as Spiritual Director for the Community. Some recommendations have been forwarded

to the Board and the topic is ongoing.

The St. Mary's in Exile documents, 'Process for Dealing with Concerns and Conflicts' and 'Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Policy' were reviewed and updated and suggestions were forwarded to the Board.

According to the Terms of Reference, each year two members of the Community Faith Council must step down to provide an opportunity for new members to come on to the Council. Pam Krueger and Andrew Kennelly agreed to step down this year after serving two years on the Council. We thank them for their dedication and the great wisdom that

each contributed to the Community Faith Council meetings. The new members are Kate Fanton and Susan Ientile.

The purpose of the St. Mary's in Exile Community Faith Council as stated in the Terms of Reference is to facilitate a vision for St. Mary's in Exile and provide leadership that may assist in its development and continuation as a Christian Community. All members of the Council attended to this responsibility with diligence and a genuine desire to serve the Community. We thank the Community members for their trust and support.

Brian O'Hanlon



Faith Council members: Terry Fitzpatrick, Maureen Hennigan (Chair), Margaret Clifford, Marg Ortiz, Margaret Lawson. Missing: Kate Fanton, Susan Ientile, Brian O'Hanlon.

Summary if the Financial Report submitted at the Annual General Meeting of St Mary's Ltd

<u>FINANCIAL YEAR FROM JUL 1 2015</u>	<u>DEBIT</u>	<u>CREDIT</u>
<u>DETAILS</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
INCOME		
COLLECTIONS COMMUNITY		\$107,440.20
MEMBERSHIP FEES RECEIVED		\$320.00
ON LINE SAVER ACCOUNT INTEREST		\$918.02
TOTAL INCOME		\$108,678.22
EXPENSES		
SALARIES & ALLOW. T.FITZPATRICK	\$87,059.04	
ADMINISTRATION EXPENSES	\$7,350.00	
LITURGY/MUSIC WORKERS	\$15,260.00	
CHURCH & LITURGY EXPENSES	\$2,065.39	
PRINTING & STATIONERY	\$10,014.04	
REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE	\$1,927.72	
INSURANCES	\$4,478.61	
TELEPHONE, FAX & COMPUTER	\$4,447.16	
POSTAGE	\$297.38	
AMENITIES, TEAS & BOARD EXPENSES.	\$2,276.99	
BOOKS, TAPES, MAGAZINES ETC.	\$31.82	
SUPERANNUATION PAYABLE	\$6,708.00	
TRANSPORT EXPENSES	\$3,109.89	
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$125,022.04	
FINANCIAL YEAR TO DATE	-\$16,345.82	
DONATIONS RECEIVED FROM COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND PASSED ONTO MICAH		
For the period from 1st July 2015		
	2015-2016	2014-2015
Homeless & Housing Fund	\$17,101.00	\$18,015.00
Micah Projects Inc	\$19,034.00	\$20,674.00
	\$36,135.00	\$38,689.00

It's all about Getting Together

Bayside Cluster

Michael and I started up a Family Group back in the 90's when were part of the St Mary MacKillop parish in Birkdale. We know how special it is to belong to a group who have common interests and the bond of a church community.

So when Marg asked me if we were interested in starting a cluster group in our area, I jumped at the opportunity.

We commenced our bayside cluster group in May this year with 13 members and have now grown to 18. Our first meeting was more of a get together to discuss what each person was hoping to get out of such a group.

Some go to different SMX masses and not all get in every Sunday with the trip taking approximately 45 min from Bayside, so it is a great opportunity to keep in touch.

Tarrigindi Cluster

Contact : a_jlarking@optusnet.com.au

Our cluster started with over a dozen people who met to share their disappointments and deeply held convictions on our position in the wider Church. These were times of great change and many found issues of doctrine were confronting and their needs were not being met so went to other clusters or ceased attending St Mary's TLC.

From this start a core group of nine have travelled together, discerning matters of spirituality, current topics in progressive theology and specific issues such as priesthood and personal journey to name a few.

While books from the library and drop shop, and other sources, attendance at lectures and the SMX weekly homilies



Tarrigindi cluster enjoy Christmas lunch

We have a lot of common themes including:

- Fellowship, food, discussing interesting topics,
- Support network
- Sharing good contacts for food (meat, veg, fish, plants, restaurants, etc). Maybe opportunities for group purchases?
- Sharing other contacts and neighbourhood information
- Movies
- Books
- SMX activities

We decided to share the hosting and also go out for dinner occasionally. At one of our meetings hosted by Bob and Dorothy Aldred we had a guest speaker (Kerry Lawrence) who spoke to us about

have underpinned our discussions we have been free to do our own reading and download reviews presenting to the group when it is our time to lead the group. The leader rotates each month and chooses with consensus/approval what they would like to share. We usually receive "study or prayer notes" in advance.

Support for one another is paramount and takes many forms both practical and presence through email and internalisation of the others' needs.

Each member treasures the opportunities for growth in our spiritual journey provided by our group and would welcome others to join us.

We meet on a Tuesday from 10.30-noon and then share a pot luck lunch, latest 'going on's' and wherever the Spirit takes us. We are flexible as to date as it is important as many members attend.

Jude Larking

Paddington Cluster

In the Paddington Cluster Group we have tried various things. We tried studying a book. We were pretty hopeless and ultimately if it was a good book we ended up hating it. We decided not to go down that track again.



Lunch at Coochimudlo

her many Comino Walks. It gave many of us something to aspire to do in the next few years.

Our meeting last month was a picnic lunch at Indigiscapes, Capalaba where we enjoyed each other's company and a lovely walk around the lagoon. We all enjoyed this so much that we decided our next meeting to go to Coochiemudlo Island for lunch.

Eileen and Michael Kirby

We tried doing some social justice work together as a group and because some of us work and don't have a lot time and some of us didn't work but were involved in other things, what we were committed to was left to two or three and they did a remarkable job. The whole group wasn't involved so that didn't work.

We did a lot of meditation in the beginning and well, that has its place. It's hard coming home from work, having dinner, going out to sit for an hour or part of the hour in silence. Our group has an energy about it and besides, how do you get to know each other if we sit in silence for the whole time. We do have evenings where we do meditate but it is not our main focus.

We have met as a group for 4 – 5 years, a couple of members have come and gone but mostly the group has stayed the same.

On a rotational basis a member prepares and presents the discussion and reading.

Celebrate Christmas in July and pre Christmas with a social dinner.

Periodically we meet to determine our future program and what our actual objective or theme for our Cluster actually is. We believe the purpose of our

It's all about Getting Together

Paddington Cluster

Cluster is about Community and support within the group to discuss subjects from which we can learn and enrich our understanding of whatever the member decides.

Our Cluster provides support when/where possible at funerals, people missing at mass, those needing financial help. Spontaneous help is given when the need is known.

For example, in the last three months we have shared such a discussion about our way forward. Consequently, Madonna Treschman prepared a discussion, and this month Kerry Lawrence prepared a particularly interesting talk about the book *The Age of Reason: Being an Investigation of True and Fabulous Theology* written by the English and American political activist Thomas Paine.

One of the characteristics of our group is that we look at how far we have come. We are from various denominations or non-denomination and due to family events or what ever, "we go back to our old churches and come out with various reactions. I for one go back to my childhood denomination because the grandkids are being dedicated and the format of the service and the topic of the sermon or liturgy makes me sick to the core. I am thankful for the freedom that I now experience not being tied down to the fundamental ways that I used to live.

At one of the meetings recently we were having a discussion about something, as you do, when it was agreed that through our talking points over the years we have been able to let go of the wrestle, the struggle, the turmoil, the self consciousness of not knowing and not having the answers. The rest of the group agreed. It was lovely, as I looked back to the beginning of the group and thinking about the intensity we had back then to the relaxed feeling that we have now of just sitting together with the unknown, the unanswerable and waiting for it to evolve if it ever does. This to me is the specialness and purpose of this particular group.

Margaret Wheat

The Fairfield Cluster

At 6:30pm on the last Monday of each month at Ingerid's home six to nine people meet to "Share, Laugh and Support" one another in a communal gathering of friends.

Our shared experience as members of SMX brings us together to explore our lives hopes and ideas in a safe space based on respect and trust.

We gather around a table, eat from a wide array of food and drink prepared with love. For me this is a time of deep wonder, in a room of people I may have never met, to marvel at their wisdom and lives lived with so much meaning.

Over the past year we have all brought our interests, struggles and

dreams for discussion, rumination and enlightenment. We agree and disagree in a space that is filled with respectful open hearts and minds.

Some topics we have deliberated on this year include:

ANZAC Day, its significance and meaning in 21st C Australia

Wisdom and Knowledge

The Sufi "Way of the Beloved"

Hymns, old and new, that sustain us

What we desire of the immediate or not so immediate future

We continue into 2017 with the place of meeting to be advised as Ingerid will again be on her beloved Camino journey early in the year.

Ingerid Meagher



Non-duality Book club members

Peter's Non-Duality Book Club

Peter's non-duality book group of up to 10 people has been meeting from three till four o'clock on the first Sunday of the month in the courtyard café of the Art Gallery.

At present we read from '*The Life and The Teaching of Sailor Bob Adamson*', an

erstwhile pupil of Nisargadatta Maharaja, as told by Kalyani Lawry.

We don't necessarily stick to the book, which lends itself very well to choosing random passages. Every now and then someone comes up with a passage from a book (or "a passage from life!") that asks for pondering/contemplation or discussion.

Ingerid Meagher



Most of the Southern Cluster. Jan and Jo are missing

It's all about Getting Together

The Scriptural Study Group

We are somewhat different than the other clusters. For a start we have a posh name, 'Scriptural Study Group'. We are a book club.

The book club has been going for several years and I have been attending the book club for the past three years. Currently I lead our study discussions, having taken over that role to allow Gwen Roberts to have a rest. We have seven regular members and new members are most welcome. We meet on the first Tuesday of the month, from 7.30 pm till 9.00 pm.

The chocolates provided for our consumption are delicious.

Our interest in the past three years has been to study books usually authorised by historian/theologians who have undertaken the task of revisioning, (re-establishing the Christian story, based on scholarly research, reinterpretation and updated discoveries), of the past 6000 years, and especially the past 2000 years of the Christian tradition. Surprisingly I have found this reviewing of our tradition most stimulating and challenging.

These are the books that have been studied in my time at the book club:

Jesus Then and Jesus Now by Gregory C Jenks: This is a study of Jesus, the man, without all the miracle bits.

The First Paul by Marcus J Borg and John Dominic Crossan: This is a reclaiming of the work of a radical visionary, a Christ Mystic and his message for the widening Church.

Beyond Belief by Elaine Pagles: This is an historical update of the violent contest between supporters of the Gospel of John and supporters of other Gospels,



(particularly Thomas) for a place of acceptance as one of the canonical Gospels.

Saving Jesus from the Church by Robyn R. Meyers: This is a modern day critical evaluation of much of the dogmatic foundations of the Church's tradition. It is a call to follow Jesus rather than worship Christ.

For myself such reading has raised many questions and so in search of some meaning I also read Christianity without God by Lloyd Geering: It is a wonderful brief history of Christianity and, surprise! it was all made up!!!!

This re-setting of history and updating of knowledge allows me to appreciate further the wonderful community we continually develop here at St. Mary's in Exile.

Brian O'Hanlon

Southern Cluster

I joined the St Mary's Community in 2008 when we were still meeting in the church down the road. St Mary's is a very warm community and I always felt very welcomed. I particularly remember the

Fun Folic and Friendship

Adie and Rob with a few of their FFF friends enjoy eating and talking, which, along with singing along with Wash and sharing favourite stories and poems, constitutes a great night out for us all.

big sign at the back of the church which read 'No one is turned away from the table of the lord.'

However it was when I went on the St Mary's trip to Laos that I became more involved and met more of the people. I met Marg and Doc Ortiz on this trip and decided to join their cluster group which meets in their home at Sunnybank on the second Monday evening of each month. There are about 10 in this group when all attend.

We take turns in preparing and leading a liturgy which includes celebrating Eucharistic. After our liturgy we share dinner, usually salad, pizza and dessert, washed down with a glass or two of red (or white).

As we are all part of St Mary's, an inclusive faith group, we also welcome other faith groups. Last week we had a lovely evening led by Jaye, one of our members who talked about Tibetan Buddhism. She brought along a Buddha and set up a little altar in the tradition of Tibetan Buddhism. We took turns to read through the ceremony and Jay explained it as we went along.

I think a particular strength of our group now is that we are all taking a turn at leading and preparing the liturgy and each person brings with them their particular strengths and interests.

I would highly recommend joining a cluster group in your area. It is a great way to have interesting and meaningful discussions and to meet others from the St Mary's Community and get to know them better than just the casual hello after mass.

Cathy Polites



Scriptural Study Group

Archbishop Coleridge Pays us a Visit

We entertained the Archbishop to morning tea after the 9am Eucharistic celebration in October. He spoke warmly about the community while acknowledging there would be no going back for us. We appreciated his friendliness and positive approach to our community. We are hoping for a return visit sometime in the future.

Below is a letter to Archbishop Coleridge, written by Narell Mullins before his visit.

Archbishop Mark Coleridge
"Wynberg"
Brunswick St
New Farm Q 4005

Dear Archbishop Mark,

I am delighted that you are coming to meet the St Mary's Community at the TLC next Sunday morning.

As a long time member of this special community, I cannot articulate the depth of gratitude for support that I feel I owe this community. I cannot imagine that I, with many personal family challenges amongst tragedy would have felt free to be as open and honest in any other Parish setting. I think this is how many feel. It does not matter what our flaws or circumstances are, St Mary's has remained faithful in its genuine inclusiveness and both Peter and Terry's service to the community has enriched our journeying.

I was in Canberra recently visiting my ageing father and for a day I hired a car and went to visit the Wagga Presentation Sisters' Community to which I belonged for twelve years. The Sisters told me that they longed for the richness of liturgy we experience at our St Mary's especially through the varied homily sharing that never ceases to challenge - and even disturb us from our comfort zone.

During this rushed Wagga visit, I also took the opportunity to have a precious hour and half with Frank Carroll who is another who has never ceased to accept me warmly and unconditionally. I told him of your impending visit to St Mary's.

I was struck recently in reading an article by the new Bishop of Parramatta Diocese



who himself speaks out for genuine inclusion and acceptance. He writes, and I believe, lives courageously stepping aside from conformity for its own sake.

I wonder what the price would be if you actually came to our 9am Liturgy and even sat in the back row? Maybe you would be criticised, but you strike me as someone who could defend that in the name of reaching out and acceptance?



Patti and the Archbishop - both look quite happy

All I know is that it would warm the hearts of many in our SMX Community to have you share the liturgy with us. Please consider this as you would be warmly welcomed.

I look forward to being in the SMX gathered community to welcome you on Sunday.

Sincerely

Narelle Mullins 16 October 2016

Washuntara Sings

Cathy Polites hosted a house concert for our own very gifted musician, Washuntara..

Wash has had a celebrated career as a musician in the United States but has been slowed down by illness since he returned to Australia earlier in the year. We love it when Wash joins the choir at our liturgies and he is a very much valued member of our community.

The concert was beautiful. Wash is an inspirational singer and story teller. We all connected so well with him as he talked and sang. Watch out for further house concerts and go along.

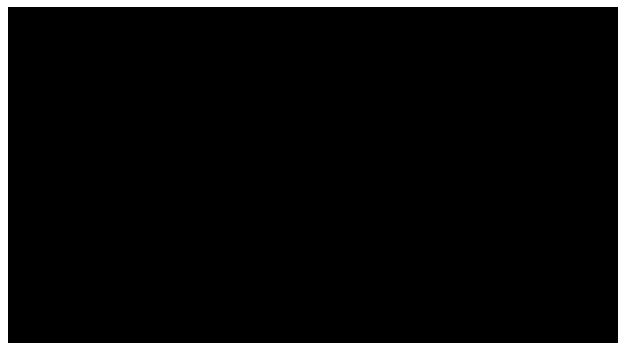


Refugees

They have no need of our help
So do not tell me
These haggard faces could belong to you or me
Should life have dealt a different hand
We need to see them for who they really are
Chancers and scroungers
Layabouts and loungers
With bombs up their sleeves
Cut throats and thieves
They are not
Welcome here
We should make them
Go back to where they came from
They cannot
Share our food
Share our homes
Share our countries
Instead let us
Build a wall to keep them out
It is not okay to say
These are people just like us
A place should only belong to those who are born there
Do not be so stupid to think that
The world can be looked at another way

Brian Bilston

Read aloud top to bottom and then bottom to top





St Mary's Matters - Edition 45

Editor- Margaret Ortiz
Finances- Doc Ortiz

Sub-editors -Jan Murray
Joan Mooney

Printed by John Hallett
Xavier Grafix

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