



Mountain and Sea

A periodic newsletter of the Anglican Parish of
Caloundra-Glasshouse Country

St Andrew's Caloundra
Mary McKillop Centre Beerwah
St Thomas' Mooloolah

Issue #6 5 November 2021

Welcome to our new parish newsletter. This publication has come about because of revisions to our parish Pew Bulletin. We intend and hope to publish "Mountain and Sea" fortnightly, and it will comprise information about events and life within the parish, as well as articles of a theological or informative nature, and some more light-hearted material. We hope that

you enjoy it, and will find it both instructive and diverting. Please direct any comments or complaints to the locum priest, Fr Michael.

Notices

The Pacific Chamber Players are presenting “Baroque Brilliance” at Eudlo Hall on Saturday 13 November commencing at 2pm. You will be transported with music of Torelli, Albinoni, Telemann, J.S. Bach, Vivaldi and Handel. Flyers will be on the table near the church’s front door. Bookings via website or admission at the door. Adults \$28 and concessions \$25. See you there. Anne

Two charities that the parish has supported in previous years:

- Empty Christmas Tree (for the Women’s Shelter on the Sunshine Coast) - Calling for gifts to fill the Empty Christmas Tree. Items requested include NEW clothing, toiletries or household items for women and toys for children of all ages up to 17 years. Please mark the clothing size and whether the gift is for a boy or girl on the outside of the bag or parcel. Please note second-hand items are not accepted. Gifts will go to the SunnyKids Women’s Shelter Sunshine Coast. Your support at Christmas is valued by those who receive.

- TEAR fund selling cards, raising funds for third world countries - It’s TEAR time again. TEAR is a Christian organisation which works in partnership with churches overseas as well as with indigenous communities in Australia. Afghanistan, Burma, Uganda, PNG and Ethiopia are a few of

the countries where they have projects. I have received the useful gift cards and catalogues which I will put at the back of the church if you would like to look or take one home. The idea is you purchase a gift like a chicken, safe water, teacher training or a goat to give or post to your relatives or friends as their Christmas card or gift. Prices range from \$5 for a chicken to \$50 for a goat. I, with the help of Mary Bottomer, Kay Turner and Wendy O'Brien, am running a stall where you can purchase these cards from November 14 till the Sunday before Christmas.

And I bet these are the only Christmas presents you buy that are tax deductible! If you have any questions, I'll be at the table outside the front door of the church from the 14th or phone me on 0408 986243 and I'll do my best to answer them. If you are unable to come to church, please phone me with your order and one of us will deliver the cards to you. Many thanks on behalf of TEAR. Jean Ward

Bishop Jeremy will be visiting the Mary MacKillop Centre for the Eucharist at 9AM on Sunday 21 November, where he will preside and preach.

Other Forthcoming Events

Friday 5 November - "Trivia Night" at St Andrews

Saturday 13 November - "Taizé" service at St Andrew's, 6 PM

Tuesday 23 November - "Anglican Frenz" end of year Dinner will be on at Pelican Waters Bowls Club commencing at 6pm for a two-course dinner. Gold coin donations will also be

collected to raise funds for the Mission to Seafarers and the Archbishop's November Appeal.

Saturday 4 December - Mooloolah Markets

Saturday 11 December - "Taizé" service at St Andrew's, 6 PM

Sunday 19 December - "Lessons and Carols" at St Andrew's

7-12 January 2022 - The CMS Summer School at Mt Tamborine - details coming soon

Thank You

Sincere thanks are extended to Ken Mewburn and the gardening team who are retiring from their special ministry caring for St Andrew's gardens. Their work has continued over many years. We also thank Des O'Neill who will continue to watch over the gardens while other ways are being investigated to ensure our beautiful gardens continue to flourish.

Some Funny Saints

We are about to celebrate the Feast of All Saints. To which many non-believers, and believers, may say: "Big deal - who would want to be anything like those gloomy, morose, unsmiling people that we see portrayed in Christian art?"

But here's a surprise: even the briefest glance at their biographies reveals joyful and energetic men and women who liked to have a laugh. Indeed, the more you know about the actual lives of the saints, the more it strikes you as bizarre that so many statues, paintings and mosaics of the saints show them as unsmiling men and women. These are surely

misrepresentations of the holy men and women of Christian history, many of whom were not only joyful but had terrific senses of humour.

Stories about the overt humour of the saints reach as far back as the early Roman martyrs -- that is, from the very earliest days of the church. In the third century, St. Lawrence, who was burned to death on a grill, over hot coals, called out to his executioners, "This side is done. Turn me over." In the fourth century, St. Augustine of Hippo, cheekily prayed, "Lord, give me chastity ... but not yet."

Some saints were known specifically for their rich sense of humour. St. Philip Neri, a 16th-century Italian priest, for example, was called "The Humorous Saint." Over his door he posted a small sign that read, "The House of Christian Mirth." En route to a ceremony in his honour, he once shaved off half his beard, as a way of poking fun at himself. "Christian joy is a gift from God, flowing from a good conscience," he said. And "A heart filled with joy is more easily made perfect than one that is sad."

Much of St. Philip Neri's humour was a way of keeping him humble, as he engaged in what could only be called acts of public silliness, like wearing a cushion on his head like a turban and wearing a foxtail coat in the middle of the summer. When a young priest asked Philip what prayer would be the most appropriate to say for a couple after a wedding Mass, the future saint said, "A prayer for peace."

St. Francis de Sales, the 17th-century bishop of Geneva and renowned spiritual master, espoused what you might call a sensible, cheerful and gentle spirituality. "When you encounter difficulties and contradictions, do not try to break them, but bend them with gentleness and time," he once wrote. His humane approach to spiritual matters stood in contrast to some of the rigidities of his day. So did his desire to help lay people live a life of deep spirituality -- when "real" spirituality was thought to be the province of clerics. His classic text "Introduction to the Devout Life" was written specifically to help laypeople on their path to God.

Francis de Sales also knew how to use a joke to good effect. He was, for example, a great friend of St. Jane Frances de Chantal, a French

noblewoman, and together, in 1610, they founded a religious order for women, the Visitation sisters. After Jane had initially decided to follow a strict religious life and remain unmarried after being widowed, she continued to wear low-cut dresses showing off her décolletage. On the night of their first meeting, Francis de Sales took a look at her dress and quipped, "Madame, those who do not mean to entertain guests should take down their signboard."

Saintly humour continues up until modern times. Perhaps the most well-known contemporary example is Pope John XXIII, who served as pope from 1958 to 1963. His most famous joke came when a journalist innocently asked him, "Your Holiness, how many people work in the Vatican?" John paused, thought it over, and said, "About half of them." Someone once asked John about the Italian habit of closing offices in the afternoon. "Your Holiness, we understand that the Vatican is closed in the afternoon, and people don't work then."

"Ah no!" said the pope. "The offices are closed in the afternoon. People don't work in the morning!" Shortly after his election as pope, John was walking in the streets of Rome when a woman passed him and said to her friend, "My God, he's so fat!" Overhearing her remark, he turned around and replied, "Madame, I trust you understand that the papal conclave is not exactly a beauty contest." In the 1940s, when John was still an archbishop and the papal nuncio, or ambassador, in Paris, he was at an elegant dinner party, seated across from a woman wearing a low-cut dress that exposed a good deal of cleavage. Someone turned to him and said, "Your Eminence, what a scandal! Aren't you embarrassed that everyone is looking at that woman?" And he said, "Oh no, everyone is looking at me, to see if I'm looking at her."

John XXIII is an avatar for holy humour. A book was published in his lifetime entitled, "Wit and Wisdom of Good Pope John".

One passage was a story that placed the pope in a Roman hospital called the Hospital of the Holy Spirit. Shortly after entering, he was introduced to the sister who ran the hospital. "Holy Father," she exclaimed, "I am the superior of the Holy Spirit."

"Well, I must say, you're lucky," said the pope, delighted. "I'm only the Vicar of Christ!"

Who couldn't love a pope who had a sense of humour? And who couldn't love a man who was so comfortable about himself that he constantly made jokes about his height (which was little), his ears (which were big) and his weight (which was considerable). Born Angelo Roncalli, in the small town of Sotto il Monte, near Bergamo, after he was elected pope, he met a little boy named Angelo and exclaimed, "That was my name, too!" Then, conspiratorially, "But then they made me change it!"

Much of his humour seemed to flow naturally from his joy. His joy made him comfortable enough to laugh at himself, to poke fun at his office, and invited others into his humorous outlook on the world. And that joy made him comfortable with the absurdities of the world. For his openness, his generosity and his warmth and his humour, "Good Pope John" was loved by many. When he died a Jewish cab driver in Rome exclaimed, "He was our pope, too".

There is something irresistible about a person in a position of authority with a self-deprecatory sense of humour. It instantly binds you to the person. Perhaps because we see in him or her a reflection of what we could be, of what God wants us to be even in the midst of our accomplishments: simple, humble, aware of our own limitations and, of course, joyful.

Fr Michael

November 2021

The photograph on the following page is of a cemetery in Belgium. The two tombstones are separated by a wall dividing Catholic and Protestant graves; a husband and wife forced apart in death are united by the clever "handshake" artwork. Fortunately, this kind of sectarian pettiness is on the decline.



Pilgrimage: The Camino, or Journey to Santiago di Compostela

Each year thousands of pilgrims undertake all or part of the Camino: on bicycle, horseback or foot, they converge at Santiago with half of Spain, for the Feast of St James on 25 July. For many of them, it's an opportunity to renounce, at least for a time, rapid and polluting forms of transport, re-connect with the soil beneath their feet, gain a deeper spiritual perspective, perhaps take time to come to terms with some life-crisis and allow the slower, gentler pace to give a sense of what the human journey is for.

*Give me my scallop shell of quiet;
My staff of faith to walk upon;
My scrip of joy, immortal diet;
My bottle of salvation;
My gown of glory (hope's true gage)
And then I'll take my pilgrimage.
(Sir Walter Raleigh)*

The four centuries leading up to the Reformation were regarded as the golden age of pilgrimage. At thousands of locations throughout Christendom, churches, abbeys, cathedrals, shrines or even natural features attracted pilgrims of every class, rank and occupation who sought a divine favour, a cure, penance or simply wished to pray where earth and heaven seemed to be closely aligned. According to the French chronicler Radulph Glaber, Europe seemed to be overcome by a religious frenzy. 'Some years after the year 1000 CE there was a sudden rush to rebuild churches all over the world', even though many of these churches were perfectly serviceable. 'It was as if the world itself had thrown aside its old rags and put on a shining white robe of churches'

Pilgrimage to holy places grew in popularity during the eleventh century. The physical pilgrimage was an analogy to one's spiritual journey. The bringing together of the temporal and spiritual worlds was present in early Christian thought and writing. Avitus, Bishop of Vienne (495-525 CE) wrote, "There is a place, far on the eastern side of the world where winter and summer do not follow each other in succession". Pope Gregory the

Great at the end of the sixth century spoke of the fields where the sheep of Christ the shepherd fed, spending eternity in the presence of God and eternally contemplating the one who was their spiritual food. To be able to think of oneself as traveling to such places by simply setting off on a journey was a powerful idea. It was also linked to an ancient Platonic and Christian idea that all creation is on a journey back to God; sinful humans have wandered off the path and must make an effort to return to God. Pilgrimages were a “quest for the earthly Jerusalem” and by the millennium two types of pilgrimage predominated; the penitential and the supplicant. There was a particular surge in the latter form between approximately 950 and 1150 CE, when many pilgrims sought the divine intervention of saints at their shrines.

Pilgrimages of supplication were based on the premise that a holy man or woman was thought to leave behind, in objects touched or places visited, a residual power, a “merit” which pious people could acquire for their assistance in their own troubles by going on a pilgrimage and praying at the shrine. Although never more than a tiny proportion of the population was able to undertake a pilgrimage, by the eleventh century large numbers of votive pilgrims could be found on routes all over Europe, accompanied by thieves, prostitutes, vendors of “relics”, itinerant workers, jugglers, troubadours, etc. Authentic pilgrims had an official passport which also guaranteed food and lodging at monasteries on the route.

Although the cult of relics was criticised almost from its inception, the 11th century was possibly the last occasion that the ‘discovery’ of specious relics could command universal acceptance. At Sens, part of Moses’ rod was discovered in the foundations of the cathedral. At Salerno relics of St Matthew were recovered and in the abbey at Monte Cassino the body of St Benedict was discovered in building rubble (all of these convenient discoveries triggered a great convergence of the faithful). Despite being only founded in 1131, by 1190 Reading Abbey possessed 29 relics of Our Lord, six of the Virgin, nineteen of the patriarchs and prophets, fourteen of the apostles, seventy-three of martyrs, fifty-one of confessors and forty-nine of virgins. Erasmus wrote to his growing anticlerical readership that there was enough wood of the true cross to build a battleship, and that some saints had more arms than an octopus and more feet than a centipede.

Pilgrimage was also a powerful form of penance: the more arduous the journey, the more sins it washed away. Inquisitors sent offenders on pilgrimages; in 1241, 98 people from the towns of Gourdon and Montcuq were commanded to visit Santiago. Penitential pilgrimages were also a useful stratagem for banishing dissidents or political rivals for the months or years they took to complete. Roger da Bonito, for example, was sent to Rome, Jerusalem and Santiago by the inquisition in 1319 for murdering the bishop of Fricento. He was evidently too important to execute or even imprison but a penance by way of an arduous and costly pilgrimage apparently sufficed. Pilgrimages could be penance for recanting heretics, who were identified by the wearing a yellow cross. Another inquisitorial innovation was a passport or testimonial certifying completion of pilgrimage for penitents to prove their compliance. Millenarian anxiety also encouraged some to make a pilgrimage at this time.

By the 11th century three pilgrimages had special prestige: Compostela, the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem and to Rome. The decline of the caliphate of Ummayad left northern Spain in relative peace and freed the route from France to Santiago. Hostels were constructed along the camino de Santiago and all the bridges on the main roads across northern Spain were rebuilt by Alfonso VI. One writer notes cynically that "In early medieval Europe, saints' cults did not simply happen: they were made". The economic advantages of large number of visitors were significant, therefore cults were actively encouraged by local bishops and clergy, and miracle cures and other interventions attributable to the local saints were duly noted and publicised.

Two propositions informed the cult of St James; first he preached the gospel in Spain as well as the holy land, and secondly, after his martyrdom at the hands of Herod Agrippa I his disciples carried his body by sea to Spain and thence for burial at Compostela. There was no indication during the first 600 years of the Christian era that James had lived or preached in Spain. The earliest evidence for this contention is contained in the *Breviarum Apostolorum*, a 7th century codex of known saints. Other evidence includes a hymn written to St James, composed in northern Spain between 733-8 CE. The derivation of the name "Compostela" is that it comes

from the Latin phrase *campus stella*, "the field of the star", making Santiago de Compostela "St. James of the Field of the Star". This stems from a pious folktale that the remains of St James were transported from Palestine to Spain and then buried in a place indicated by a divinely located star. A church was eventually built over the bones, and later replaced with the Cathedral de Santiago de Compostela.

The appeal and importance of Santiago de Compostela as a destination of pilgrimage persists to the present. The modern *Cursillo* movement traces its origins to an expedition mounted by a group of young laymen to the cathedral seeking to reinvigorate the postwar Spanish church. In modern London, pilgrims can be seen at Victoria station equipped with staves and decorated with scallops, the particular emblem associated with St James, and books, guides, maps and other publications for the 21st century pilgrim abound. Now, as then, four main routes take the pilgrim to Santiago; they each begin in French towns: Le Puy, Vézaly, Arles and Tours. In the Middle Ages, the abbey at Cluny (now destroyed) was an additional departure point. Throughout southern Spain and northern France, hostels, innkeepers, monasteries and other secular and religious establishments accommodate and feed pilgrims who travel on foot and more frequently, by bicycle. (I am planning to do this myself in the northern summer of 2010). Whether their transport is the major difference between them, and their medieval counterparts is moot; the medieval pilgrim who ventured to Santiago de Compostela undertook an arduous, time-consuming and potentially hazardous journey to pray at the Shrine of St James.

Pilgrimage, if it is real, must always be a journey into truth. It is not enough to overcome ordeals, have beautiful experiences, return home with travellers' tales to tell. There must be some glimpse of truth: about ourselves, our world, our God. In short, to be a pilgrim is a very practical and immediate way of demonstrating love for God, and for seeking out a closeness and connection with the Kingdom of Heaven.

Fr Michael

(I include this cartoon at my own expense - "proper" retirement beckons after I complete my Caloundra Glasshouse Country locum on Boxing Day!

