



Community

Quarterly news magazine of St Paul's, Manuka, and St David's, Red Hill, in the Anglican Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn

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Spring 2015

The collation of Archdeacon Brian Douglas

At a choral evensong service at St Paul's on Sunday, 21 June, the Rector, the Rev'd Dr Brian Douglas, was collated Archdeacon of South Canberra.

Before the congregation, the Bishop of Canberra and Goulburn, Bishop Stuart Robinson, asked Dr Douglas to confirm his acceptance of the ministry.

Dr Douglas responded: "I willingly accept this ministry as a call from God and commit myself to it, trusting in the power of the Holy Spirit".

Bishop Stuart then said: "Almighty God, giver of all good things, mercifully look upon this, your servant, now called to the charge of Archdeacon of South Canberra, and so nourish him with the truth of your doctrine that he may in thought, word and deed faithfully serve you in this office, to the glory of your name and the building up of your church; through the merits of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who lives

and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever."

The Bishop then delivered the licence for the office of Archdeacon. "Accept this charge which is mine and yours; be faithful to the trust committed to you, and be a true Pastor under the great Shepherd of souls...I welcome you as Archdeacon for South Canberra."

The congregation then greeted the new Archdeacon with applause.

A conduit of unity

In his address, Bishop Stuart thanked Archdeacon Bronwyn Suptut for her exemplary ministry across the district in the last three years.

"Bronwyn," he said, "has been an agent and a conduit of unity and concord". He spoke of the gift of new life to churches across this very diverse Archdeaconry. "As Archdeacon Brian knows all too well," the Bishop said, "the Archdeaconry is far from perfect. We are faced with the sobering reality that our ministry, our life, is undertaken and lived on a battlefield; yes, a spiritual conflagration



rages about us. Make no mistake; there are dark, malevolent forces at work – actively seeking to mar, distort, and corrupt the image of God in humankind *and* sully the Name of Christ".

"We share in the ministry of Jesus: the one who through his death



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and resurrection enjoins us to contend with unjust structures; to expose ill conceived policies that further displace and marginalise people; to eschew greed and to abhor extremism, as we make disciples of all nations, as we speak of the amazing grace that has brought healing and wholeness to our lives as we share how much Jesus has done for us.

“That is why, recognising the destructive power of deceiving and malevolent spirits, Archdeacon Brian publicly stated his trust in the transforming, life-giving work of the Holy Spirit; why we prayed that through the merits of Jesus, the saving, renewing, finished work of Jesus, Brian might, as Archdeacon, build up the Church – the body of Christ.

“That is why we prayed that Brian will be nourished and fed and inspired and encouraged by the doctrines of grace. That is why we asked God to bring great glory to His name, through Brian’s ministry as Archdeacon. And that is why I charged Brian with the weighty responsibility of being a true Pastor under the great Shepherd of souls”.

AN EXPANDED ROLE

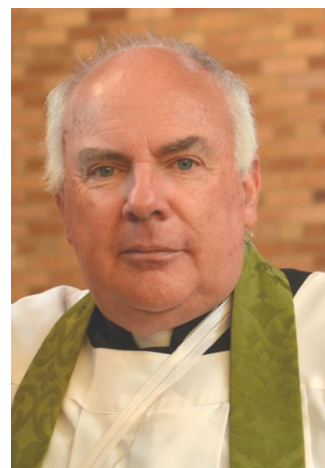
As Archdeacon of South Canberra in the Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn and Rector of St Paul’s, Manuka, the Venerable Dr Brian Douglas acquires new responsibilities, both statutory and delegated, under the Governance of the Diocese Ordinance. The Archdeaconry embraces 12 ministry units.

Archdeacons assist the Bishop in the administration and strategic direction of the Diocese, exercising either regional or portfolio functions on his behalf.

The Governance of the Diocese Ordinance 2000 envisages a crucial strategic role for Archdeacons in the structuring or reconfiguration of ministry units for mission

Archdeacons also have a key role in the appointments process following a vacancy in a ministry unit.

Archdeacons have property and financial responsibilities given to them by the Bishop in Council to assess proposals from a long term mission and ministry perspective. They confer prayerfully with the Bishop in discerning God’s vision for mission and ministry in the Diocese and play their part in both developing and implementing regional strategies to achieve it.



Archdeacons are a forum for confidential advice to the Bishop in the discharge of his responsibilities.

Archdeacons nurture the well being of clergy and ministry units within their sphere of oversight.

Archdeacons contribute diligently to the health of the whole Diocese by building links, developing relationships and fostering cooperation which transcend the local and regional.

The ministry units within the Archdeaconry are: Chapman, Curtin, Deakin, Kambah, Lanyon Valley, Manuka, Pearce, South Tuggeranong, Wanniasa, Weston and Woden.

New Bishop consecrated

Although the winter chill had settled on Goulburn, the congregation in St Saviour’s Cathedral on Saturday 13 June 2015 warmly received Dr Matt Brain as bishop following his consecration.

Archdeacon Brain was consecrated as the new Assistant Bishop in the Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn with responsibilities for training and development, making him the youngest bishop in the Anglican Church of Australia.

The Archbishop of Sydney, the Most Rev’d Dr Glenn Davies, led the consecration service. Dr Brain’s father, the Rt Rev’d Peter Brain and former Bishop of Armidale,



Bishop Matt greets his family following his consecration

delivered the sermon.

Dr Brain came to Canberra in 2010 from the Diocese of North West Australia where he served as the Diocesan youth minister and in the parish of Kalbarri.

Since 2013 he had been Director of Parish Support, Chaplaincy and

Mission where he has worked closely with parishes and chaplains to develop their capacity for ministry.

A physiotherapist by background, Dr Brain trained for ministry in Perth and was ordained in 2003. After serving as a priest in the Diocese of North-West Australia for seven years, he moved to the Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn to become Director of Synergy Youth and Children’s Ministry.

He is a lecturer at St Mark’s National Theological College and plays a leadership role with the International Association for the Study of Youth Ministry, which aims to foster the study and development of youth ministry as a recognised profession.

Story and Photo: Wayne Brighton

Discipleship, word and story

“Take my yoke upon you and learn of me”. Matthew 11:2

It is a natural preoccupation of the Editor to explore how all the elements of church communication, journalism among them, might intersect with theology to convey the full meaning and dimensions of what the Bible proclaims as “the good news” in the life of Jesus, to fill what has been described as “the airless space” between faith, religion, mystery, perception and understanding.

Such discernment in word and story goes to the heart of our being disciples in communion with each other, propelled by a “divine indwelling”.

In her key-note presentation to the Bishop’s Cathedral Convention Dr Alison Morgan compared discipleship to an apprenticeship where, through on the job training, the apprentice learns to become like the teacher.

The message of that discipleship, and the language it uses as a call to holiness remain a challenge.

Community’s extended dialogue with the Rector (Issue No. 32) on the eve of his collation as Archdeacon shed its own light on the connection when he spoke of the centrality of communication in the life of the church.

“Communication must involve not only speaking but listening. Often it is very important for people to express themselves since it is in the expression that people often find their meaning”.

Discipleship begins in church. As Archdeacon Brian said:

“We must start in worship, go on in worship, and end in worship. It is from this point that we go out to do other things.”

“My grace is sufficient for you,” says the Lord, “for my power is made perfect in weakness.” 2 Corinthians 12:9

A defining quality of the special language of the church is “grace”, the “inner life” to be captured by the reporting of it, just as the Gospel writers reported in word and story their experience with Jesus.

That “inner life” flows from the disciplined devotional reading and understanding of the Gospels, and the capacity to articulate and balance the objective and the subjective, to proclaim the experience of what we believe and seek to share.

“Grace” emboldens a language which has many dimensions to it. It displays its own rhythms and strength. It reflects an overriding feeling of good will towards others to engage with them. It perfects its own style, biblically inspired and governed by the power of divine grace. The language of grace thus is a spiritual perception, a received vision of Christianity, richly grounded theologically in the Biblical texts so that as St Paul said: “your words may minister grace to those who hear”. (*Ephesians 4:29*)

Archdeacon Brian had said:

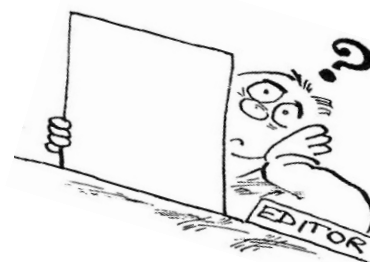
“There are different ways to come to Christian understanding. We do not all act and live in the same way and God is not limited to one model of understanding. God transcends the particular”.

“Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt,...so that you may know how to answer everyone.” (Colossians 4:6)

To add “salt” in communication, as St Paul suggests, is to incorporate the dimension of imagination, which has its own power of taste.

The English essayist, William Hazlitt, spoke of imagination as a comprehensive capability. It adds to the writer’s experience to deal creatively with his materials.

The Romantic poet, Samuel Taylor Coleridge saw the Christian encounter with Scripture as the intersection of the multiple



imaginations of the Scripture writers under “the superintendence of the subjectivity of the Holy Spirit: now awakening strength, now giving power and direction to knowledge”.

It was their participation in the Spirit, he wrote, that allowed them to speak God’s word out of their own experience of the life of faith and faithfulness. Coleridge saw imagination as a faculty to complement Biblical insight.

It is through the human dimension of the inwardness of imagination and memory that Scripture promotes a conversation with us.

Archdeacon Brian also spoke of how poetry can point us beyond ourselves to bigger meaning, embracing the universal.

The quality of grace in communication integrates the expressiveness of the Biblical text into our own presentation, be it in sermon, story or poem.

The English poet William Cowper wrote that “man should continually feed upon the ‘word’ and scripture: “oh, how I love thy holy word. The spirit breathes upon the word/ and brings the truth to sight.” Like any language it has to be learned, like discipleship it involves its own apprenticeship. Once captured it is a tool of God’s word.

The vocabulary of grace in language for us is of the Gospels, what Archdeacon Brian described as “the timeless language of the scriptures which are so powerful in its distilled wisdom, transcendental in its function”.

“And the child grew and waxed strong in spirit filled with the wisdom and the grace of God upon him.” Luke 2:40 (KJV)

DIALOGUE

The joy of priesthood

As she prepared for the next journey in her life, a prestige scholarship at Oxford University, Assistant Priest at St Paul's, the Rev'd Susan Bridge, spoke to a meeting of the Discovery group. She chose to participate in a question and answer session, and invited the Editor of *Community* to ask the questions.

“After what you had already achieved in law and business.” Susan was asked, “what brought you to where you are today as a priest of the church?”

“I had always loved church, but couldn't explain why” Susan recalled. “It was while listening to a sermon series on Leviticus, and wondering why I was there, that I started to become interested, not really knowing much about the church. As was my natural thing, I decided I would do some more study. And so I undertook distance education in theology studies with St Mark's Theological Centre in Canberra. And I loved it. It started as an intellectual interest and my faith grew from that. Sometimes I think the holy spirit points you in a particular direction.

“Some people talk about being called by God to the priesthood,” she said. “I never had that sense of being called and certainly not pulled against my will, as some of my colleagues describe. I thought that in gratitude to all that God has given me I should give something back.”

Susan spoke of her transforming experience at Sydney's North Shore Hospital where she was training in chaplaincy.

“This was the most powerful single thing for me,” she recalled. “It was not just walking into a room and sitting down. It involved listening to people whom you would not normally meet. You went into their room not knowing whether the person was seriously ill or not, what their problems might be; you just sat and were open to them to talk.

“Once you give time to people”, she reflected, “everybody has something in them that is hurtful or unresolved in their past. They taught me a lot about how you can love your neighbour, if you give them time. They invite you into their joy and pain. And it is quite often surprising.

The two wards to which she was mostly assigned were burns and spinal. “People didn't talk about their shocking injuries, they talked about their relationships, with siblings, how their Dad was disappointed in them..whatever...so that was a powerful lesson in relationships. And as a priest you are in a very privileged position, to hear and be open to what people have to say. I very much think that is the joy of priesthood”.

Of being at St Paul's she said, “It is just incredibly lovely. Perhaps it grows from the kind of worship we do. I do love church and I do love this form of church where we are open to the glory of God; we are open to the idea that we can have a real relationship with God. We can



listen to the glorious music and we can experience the beauty of the surroundings but it is not as though we are worshipping a distant deity. We have a sense of somebody we can talk to as well as worship. The emphasis on coming together for Holy Communion binds us to God and Christ in a special way.

Faith in the Holy Spirit

How did she see the future of the church? “I have great faith in the Holy Spirit...and if the church gets smaller that doesn't mean it gets any less powerful. We may ask, ‘where are the kids, and the families?’ But they are somewhere else. There are churches which are attracting young families and they will grow in the Spirit.

“The decline in Christendom in the world does not mean there is a decline in the power of God moving in the world. It is the result of social change. People were obliged to go to church in the last century. That's where you made connections, you were more drawn to the parish church. That doesn't mean the power of God was any greater then. So I'm not frightened for the church. God is in it”.

Susan went on to explain:

“There are many social groups that offer a sense of community, and the church isn't the only place where people try to look after each other and be kind to one another. But we do have God as our focus and our strength. For example, if we can't do anything else,” she said, “we can honour the dead. That's a powerful thing the church does that doesn't happen elsewhere.

“When we come to worship we walk past the plaques engraved with the names of the souls whose ashes are buried here. We have that connection with the dead, a connection with something bigger than ourselves...beyond ourselves. It is the same with the sacraments. We touch ordinary things and sense the work of God in them.

“We are quite shy of sharing our faith with anyone”, she said. She recalled that her last real job before ordination was running the Australian Publishers Association – an industry group for book publishers. When she left she sent out an e-mail to say she was leaving to study theology. “I got a lot of e-mails from people to say, oh, that's great, I go to such and such a church, my Dad is a bishop. People I had been in

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A Bishop slips his moorings

To meet and listen to Richard Randerson is to be in the presence of an affable, gentle, humorous and, one might safely add, entertaining Bishop of the Church who, in retirement after 50 years in service, and formerly Dean of Auckland at Holy Trinity Cathedral, demonstrates his continuing passion to promote the Christian message.

"It concerns me greatly", he says, "that so little is understood about Christianity today. Too often, public debate is based on ignorance and caricature rather than intelligent engagement with Christian themes". He adds: "A silent church is a church that has become preoccupied with its own life and has lost sight of its mission to be a channel of compassion and a voice for justice. Both church and society are poorer for that".

A former Assistant Bishop of the Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn, Richard had returned to Canberra to launch his new book *Slipping the Moorings*, "a memoir weaving faith with justice, ethics and community". In his presentations he demonstrated his keen eye for observation of the world around him, speaking of how he had engaged with the profound changes occurring in society, exercising a ministry "at the cross roads of church and society," unrestrained in making his voice heard, his message always purposefully constructed and challenging, full of enlightenment about the person, the church and society: a sort of Triune covenant with life.

Richard was born in 1940 in Takapuna, on Auckland's North Shore. He first faced the call of priesthood in 1955 in his 5th form school year. He studied Arts at the University of Otago and went on to study at St John's College in Auckland, acquiring a Bachelor of Divinity. He was ordained Deacon in 1964 and Anglican Priest in 1965.

By the time in 1994 when he was consecrated Assistant Bishop in St Saviour's at Goulburn he had already become a controversial figure in New Zealand for his public positions and commentary. This prompted the headline in the *Church Times*: "radical from NZ for Canberra", the writer noting that he had been "a marked figure in New Zealand for his criticism of economic rationalism and the purchase of Australian naval frigates." He explained: "In speaking and acting I have always sought to be well informed on matters of faith as well as on topical issues. I also seek to consult with others before forming a viewpoint. Having done that I have taken a stand and prepared myself for whatever responses might come".

An activist Bishop

Vocationally his position in the Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn, with responsibility for the church in the wider community, built squarely on his social responsibility role in New Zealand. He saw it as an opportunity to further this chosen role of hands-on

Christian ministry.

While in Canberra he wrote opinion pieces for the *Canberra Times* and addressed conferences locally and nationally on poverty and justice. These included the GST and the national waterfront dispute, even addressing a Canberra May Day rally. With his Catholic Bishop colleague, Pat Power,

he made a joint appearance before the ACT housing committee to advocate for better housing for the poor. In 1998 he was invited to Chair an inquiry into the nature and extent of poverty in Canberra. He spent three days behind bars in Goulburn Gaol for a programme on life issues and relationships for inmates.

"What does it say," he asked, "if the church says nothing in the face of major issues of social justice and conflict?". He observes in his book: "Both church and society are at their best when they encompass difference and are enriched by it."

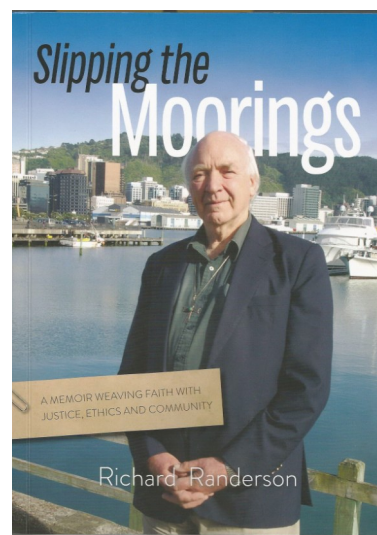
Of his five years in Canberra which concluded in 1999, he writes: "They were enriching years. I had a sense of home and yet also challenged by a new environment."

On his return to New Zealand he undertook many assignments. He was asked to join a Royal Commission on Genetic Modification which occupied him for 14 months of inquiry, a significant time in his life. He made a submission to a parliamentary select committee inquiry into the Marriage (Definition of Marriage) Bill "in line with Christian principles." He accepted an appointment as Dean of Auckland at Holy Trinity Cathedral, a position he had aspired to, taking on an additional role as Assistant to the Bishop in the Diocese. He retired as Dean and Assistant Bishop in June 2007.

Of his Christian journey he speaks of seeking to speak of God not as a divine miracle, but as a "mystery of love that encompasses and upholds us." At the age of 67 "It was time to go." In the eight years that followed there had been plenty of ongoing church and community activities, and a time to put all those accumulated clippings together into a book.

A life-changing experience

It was not the first time he had "slipped his moorings". After his ordination in 1968 Richard left New Zealand for what he describes as a "life changing journey" which came to influence him in his future church endeavours. At the time he was having difficulty with his own spirituality. There was an awareness that a dramatic shift had occurred in nature and society during his seven years in training. He wrestled with deep theological questions, part of an inner turmoil he was



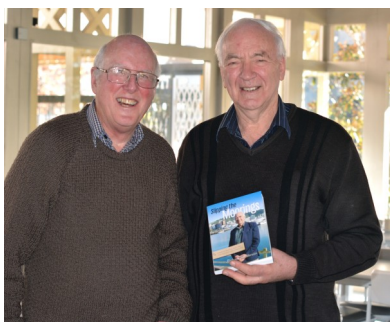
experiencing with “many dark days”. He sought a direct experience of the Holy Spirit “but to no avail.” He confronted fundamental changes in society and himself, questions about the mission of the church, faith and vocation, the unidentified causes of his dilemma.

And so it was that he and his wife Jackie “slipped the moorings” and underwent new experiences in America and England. It was in those late 1960s that he began to find his true vocation. His studies in America and England greatly influenced him, to discover himself. He had now begun to encounter new ways of being church, that reached out and spoke to people on the street, the poor and marginalised. He explored issues of poverty, wealth and justice, observing conditions in Harlem and the Bronx in New York where various non-denominational store front churches demonstrated a new way of being church.

“Gradually,” he says, “I realised that my life was being re-shaped by people living on the margins. I was learning that if a congregation’s agenda is built around the needs of its members it is hard for a middle-class church to respond to the needs of the poor and marginalised.”

A wide exposure to life

Richard Randerson writes from extensive experience in a range of spheres. He has had a wide exposure to life, serving as industrial chaplain, inner city priest, social justice officer, royal



Richard and the Rev'd Ken Batterham renew old friendships

commissioner, bishop and until his retirement cathedral dean which placed him at the centre of debate, committed to making an informed Christian contribution in the realm of public affairs, whether it be poverty, inequality, church constitutional change, recognition of the rights of Aboriginal people and marriage equality, always engaging with an authoritative understanding of individual situations.

His book, therefore, is more than a memoir: it is the narrative of a restless, searching mind, a reforming soul who sees the mission of the church as being beyond itself...”more than the landing of fish out of the sea on to the saving rock of the church, but as part of the world called to be immersed in the deepest waters.” It is a summing up of a person’s passionate involvement in the church and his own personal engagement with and advocacy with the community, a narrative of “slipping his moorings” now to re-launch himself on a new journey of enlightenment for others, committed to the needs of the poor and marginalised.

“Too often,” he says, “the Gospel is preached well outside the context of human life, thrown from outside like a lifebuoy, indifferent to the social context in which



Richard in vibrant conversation

people are rooted. It is only by venturing out that the bridge between life and faith can be built”.

“Faith”, he says, “does require the suspension of rational thought.” He adds: “My personality type is not given to Damascus Road experiences: for me things tend to build slowly. What disappoints me about today’s Church is its absence from the public square”.

There is much to learn from his book. There are lessons for everyone, from the parish to “engagement with the world”. At the heart of these issues for Richard lay profound truths of ethics, justice and respect, helping each other to find Christ-like compassion within the church and without to help society develop right relationships in all its workings.

He makes this point: “Popular preoccupation with the question of the existence or otherwise of a supernatural being diverts us from the real question about God. That question is what we experience at the heart of life, something which, while being ultimately a mystery, nonetheless gives us a sense of connection to all life, people and creation, something experienced in the nature of love, something which changes our lives and calls us to be agents of change for the wellbeing of others and the earth that sustains us.”

His is a plea that the church might be less preoccupied with its own life and more engaged with the people and life of its community, to ‘slip its moorings’ and venture out into the deep.

Slipping his own moorings yet again is just what Richard has done.

GEORGE MENHAM

Richard Randerson, *Slipping the Moorings*, Matai House, Wellington, NZ, \$30. Copies are available from ACCC. The contact person is Katherine Collins (Tel: 62726203; email: kcollins@csu.edu.au)

The anniversary of Magna Carta: 1215-2015

Robert Willson

The Rev'd Robert Willson reflects on the significance of the Magna Carta and sheds light on some of the historical background, including the role of the Church in what became a defining document of democracy and individual rights before the law. He represented the Diocese at a ceremony marking the occasion in at a ceremony in Magna Carta Place, close to Old Parliament House, in Canberra.

Very early one summer morning I slipped out of Eton College and walked down to the Thames. My wife and I were staying with our daughter and her family. Our son-in-law is a Housemaster at Eton and teaches Medieval History.

It was a beautiful morning. The great river, which someone called "liquid history", was running strongly. On the other side, high up, was Windsor Castle with the flag proudly flying.

Nearby was Runnymede where, 800 years ago, angered by King John's claim to absolute rule, a band of revolting barons forced the king to seal Magna Carta, the great charter. Modern democracy was born here. The king was forced to agree that his power was not unlimited and that he was not above the law.

THE POPE

A few weeks later news of this event reached the Pope in Rome, Pope Innocent III. In a fury he issued a Papal Bull. The Pope asserted that this charter has been forced from the king. He said it constituted an insult to the Holy See, a serious weakening of the Royal Power, a disgrace to the English nation and a danger to all Christendom.

The Pope condemned the charter: "I forbid the King to keep it, or the barons and their supporters to make him do so, on pain of excommunication, and everlasting damnation." So there!

The pope had another motive. He was terrified that a war between the English king and the barons might lead to a weakening of the united front to wage war on the Arabs then occupying the Holy Land. We call

this the Third Crusade. So even 800 years ago the Islamic issue loomed large in Europe.

THE CHURCH

Within a few weeks the king had torn up his copy in a fury. It used to be believed that copies of the Magna Carta were sent around England by the sheriffs, acting for the king.

But historians now believe that that was untrue. Such a move would have been fatal to the survival of the charter. The sheriffs were the very people under attack in the charter. As an article in the London *Sunday Times* comments, they would have consigned the Magna Carta to their castle furnaces.

Rather it appears that the medieval church was responsible for the preservation and circulation of the charter. It was the bishops who insisted that the Magna Carta be distributed to the country at large and preserved in their cathedral archives. One copy is in the Salisbury cathedral archives and another is in Lincoln Cathedral.

A meticulous examination of the handwriting of the surviving copies revealed that the Salisbury copy was a match for the script of one William of Wilton, a canon of Salisbury Cathedral. His seal on a similar document confirmed William as the unsung hero of the preservation of Magna Carta.

The third of the four surviving copies of the 1215 version went to Canterbury Cathedral. So the medieval Catholic Church, in spite of the rage of the pope, was central to the production, preservation and proclamation of the Magna Carta.

KING EDWARD I

Both Pope Innocent and King John were dead within a year. But the "Great Charter" was not forgotten and in 1297 King Edward I revived it and it became the basis of English law. It is the 1297 version which we have in Parliament House in Canberra.

The document, three thousand words in Latin, spells out the then revolutionary idea that the power of the monarch is not absolute and that there are other sources of authority, namely the law and the parliament.

How the Magna Carta came to Australia is a story in itself. It appears that a copy was sent to the British Library. By sheer accident that copy was passed on to an obscure English School, the Kings School at Bruton in Somerset, about the beginning of the 20th century. There it remained until about 1952 when it was rediscovered and offered for sale. The School needed the money.

The School offered it to the British Library but the Library would only pay two thousand, five hundred pounds for it. Sir Harold White, Commonwealth Librarian, wanted it for Australia and Prime Minister Menzies supported him and provided the money. We paid twelve thousand, five hundred pounds to get it, a very large sum in 1952.

Menzies was assailed and ridiculed for a waste of public money on "a scrap of old paper". When I attended a ceremony to mark the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta, Prime Minister Tony Abbott, said that it was "Bob Menzies' Blue Poles moment!"

THE THAMES

I will never forget sitting on the grass on the bank of the Thames not far from the spot where this tale of democracy began.

One can imagine the tents of the barons pitched along the meadows, with their pennants fluttering, and the king coming down from Windsor Castle to seal the document forced on him. It was the first time a document spelled out that a monarch did not enjoy absolute power.

One later English king, Charles I, forgot that basic lesson and tried to
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rule without parliament. He plunged the country into civil war and finally paid for his error with his life in Whitehall on 30th January 1649. That date is still remembered in the Anglican calendar with the collect for a martyr.



The Magna Carta display at Parliament House

THE JOY OF PRIESTHOOD

(Continued from page 4)

business with for eight years, and I had no idea of their own connections with the church.

“There is a way,” she said, “we have to learn to talk to people outside the church so it is not embarrassing to us and is not threatening to them, those people outside the church, those who will stand at the door at a funeral, not wanting to come inside because of their sense that they are not worthy to be there. Jesus didn’t seek out ‘worthy’ people. That is why I am grateful to be at a church like this, where we encourage people to participate with us. We don’t see other people as targets. Indeed we don’t see them as ‘other’ at all.

“Sometime people talk of old and new expressions of church as being like a lake or a river: the lake has people come to it; a river flows out to others. I don’t think we need to choose. We can have a church where we come together to worship God as well as enthusiastically embracing and caring for the rest of the world.

“My great hope is that we have a sense of gratitude and stir up others to sense that, too. I want people to know that they are likeable, and lovable, and special to God. I want people to know that we are never left alone. We are never cast out or adrift”.

King Charles was a foolish King but a good man and some say he died to preserve the Church of England. But the people soon wearied of the Puritans and invited his son, Charles II, to reclaim the throne in 1660, as long as he respected the power of parliament.

On 15 June, the 800th anniversary of the signing of Magna Carta, I was privileged to represent the Bishop and the Diocese at a ceremony in Magna Carta Place, close to Old Parliament House.

It was a glorious day. In the

sunshine the immaculate lines of the national Federation Guard were on parade and the sound of the Band of the Royal Military College filled the air..

Today we have a monument identical to the one at Runnymede, reminding us that the laws of England are also our laws.

I found myself sitting with the Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia and other distinguished lawyers.

When I spoke with Prime Minister Tony Abbott he commented how good it was to have the Church represented on the day.

Discipleship as apprenticeship

Discipleship was the theme of the Bishop’s Cathedral Convention at Goulburn on 16 May. In her key-note presentation to the convention UK based Dr Alison Morgan issued a challenge for the 400 people in the congregation to take seriously the role they had been called to as disciples. She compared discipleship to an apprenticeship where, through on the job training, the apprentice learns to become like the teacher. In the quoted words of Rowan Williams, the church is what happens when people encounter the Risen Jesus and commit themselves to sustaining and deepening that encounter in their encounter with each other.

“Throughout history,” Dr Morgan observed, “every culture has told of its own story in an attempt to define the values, priorities and assumptions that shape the lives of those who live within that story. The Bible, too,” she said, “tells the story of its assumptions, values and priorities, and we would like to find our own part in that story”.

“The challenge for our people as a whole,” she said, “is to discover how their discipleship works in the world around them. It’s about how God’s kingdom grows through our work, leisure and family time. It’s about making disciples, not just being disciples.” It was not an individual process, she said, but a community one: “You cannot be a disciple alone ...discipleship is about relationship.”

A paper *Developing Discipleship* presented to the Church of England’s General Synod offered for further conversation some pillars of discipleship.

It declared: “To be a disciple is to be called to a life of learning and formation in the likeness of Christ. Jesus teaches the deep patterns, ethics and actions of the Kingdom of Heaven, the ways of prayer and worship, the principles of life together”.

“To be a disciple is to be called to live a distinctive life of witness and service. Discipleship is an invitation to the strongest hope, the deepest joy, the greatest fulfilment, the most authentic pattern of living. “It is the highest adventure known to humanity, called, formed and sustained by the grace of God to live a life dedicated to God’s glory and distinct from the world around us. It is seen in the witness of the local church, through a community dedicated to a life of prayer, service and witness in daily life which is a living interpretation of the Christian faith”.

Such a community continually invites others to explore the Way of the Faith and provokes questions in the society in which it is set. We grow in our discipleship through Christian witness at work and in our leisure, and in our prayers and worship.”

IDLE MOMENTS

The first Westding, Pinhoe Road, Exeter

Rob May continues his childhood memories, linking two homes, past and present.

Westding became a very special place for me at five years old, with the nearest house a mile away: freedom, Exeter woods, the copse, fox hounds, chickens, Tinker my dog, the top garden, catching rabbits, hunting grey squirrels with Dad, careful not to shoot the red ones, watching foxes, my own garden, eating gooseberries and raspberries from the bush, meeting road menders with wonderfully noisy smelly steam rollers (but not getting a ride on one), walking all the way down to Pinhoe to school, mostly with the Trott children from Goffins Farm, milk delivered by tractor and dipped from a huge can into our saucepans, firewood to chop (and get billhooks stuck into shins), coppers to light fires under and mangles to turn, water to pump and hazel nuts to pick and oil lamps to light and knock over.

Not just tractors and steam rollers up there on Pinhoe Road. Every day a huge grey lorry came up the hill from the Silverton paper mill with its semi-liquid waste to take to the tip just down the road, slowly cutting back our garden bank as it shaved the corner every time: climbed up into the cabin for the trip down and back sometimes.

The baker and butcher delivered by van, the one entertaining me (Doug too, I suppose, though he always seemed more interested in cowboys and injuns) by stretching imaginary string from the gate and getting tripped up by it, and the other pulling the ends of his thumbs off and miraculously putting them back again.

I never quite worked out how Granddad and Uncle Bob used to get bits of plasticine to change from one finger to another in Fly Away Peter, Come Back Paul, either!

Westding was near Stoke Post, on the boundary corner of three parishes (and the actual post is still there). Our 'top garden', the other corner of the tee intersection, was later found to have the remains of a 1600s toll gate-house in it: the other end in Pinhoe had a matching one which lasted, I think, until the 1940s, as a sweet shop.

Farms here mostly had Jersey or South Devon dairy cattle, source of the best clotted cream. Thick milk from the cows, ferocity from the bulls. And Mum fell foul – almost – of one of them.

I think we must have been to Aunty Biddie's a few miles away (why did we never say, Uncle Wilf's?) and were walking back, Dougie in the pram with me alongside picking up bits of wood which never quite fitted into my wheel barrow.

Along came an unescorted, uncontrolled and very large Jersey bull. Not sure what terror looks like, but Mum's face was probably close ... and she started to run. She kicked one of the pram wheels, and the click startled the bull and it ran and ran and ran and Mum did NOT laugh. I think her breathing stayed rapid for several days.

Picked wild strawberries and violets: ate the first as soon as picked, the other taken to school for Miss Gamp (Stapleton, actually, but everyone called her Gamp because of her invariable umbrella in her bicycle's carrier along with a Pekinese).

A long time later, at grammar school, I was told that we were poor. They were wrong.

***Rob May
Westding
Jerrabomberra***

When history and theology come together

John Moses

The Rev'd Dr John Moses writes: "This address derives from the mind of a historian rather than a theologian. But I take comfort from the fact that the Church needs both disciplines acting to complement each other".

"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God – not the result of works, so that no one may boast."
Ephesians 2: 8,

St Paul was a mystic and obviously a man of considerable desires. And these caused in him considerable mental anguish. So, when we read this we naturally ask ourselves, "What else is new?" This is just the human condition of which each of us is well enough aware. The "old Adam", our fallen humanity, wars against the "new Adam" we have through our baptism in Christ.

In *Romans* 8: 18-20, for example Paul memorably states:

For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right but cannot do it. For I do not do the good that I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me.

The fact is that human beings are capable of being driven by self-will and altruism at the same time. That much at least history teaches us.

Theologians call it the fallen nature of humanity. Paul wrestled with it, and most famously after him did St Augustine of Hippo (354-460), and then closer to our time, Martin Luther (1483-1546), and it is he who bequeathed to us the great theological insight, already in Paul's writings, but forgotten by Rome, that if we have accepted Christ Jesus as our saviour, we are made righteous or justified, and we are forgiven and empowered to do good works that make up for our fallen nature.

It is indeed rewarding to read Luther on the question of how a depraved soul can become righteous. You don't have to go to confession or pay an *indulgence* to the church to become righteous as Rome erroneously taught; we are already made righteous by the atonement of Christ on Calvary.

And that, of course, was the key question of the Reformation back in 1517 when Professor Dr Martin Luther, the Augustinian monk, allegedly nailed his 95 theses to the door of the monastery church in Wittenberg. Luther's *Thesenanschlag* was a world shaking event when you recall the long term political consequences.

Rome was furious that a leading German theological scholar would dare to denounce the lucrative practice of paying for forgiveness of sins and for shortening the time one would have to spend in purgatory to atone for ones'

earthly sins before being allowed into the "beatific vision" which St Thomas Aquinas called the divine presence of almighty God himself.

This fund-raising venture in the Church had been practised with papal approval since the 14th century but it was practised most intensely by Pope Leo X (1513-1521) specifically to raise the funds for his great project, namely the construction of St Peter's Cathedral in Rome, and once you have actually seen it both inside and out you have to ask yourself whether, considering the consequences for Europe and the world, it had been really worth while. One has to be in two minds. But Pope Leo X, a Medici, was never going to abandon it even though the theology behind it was patently fraudulent.

The Pope's agent in Germany at the time was the Dominican monk Johann Tetzel (1465-1519) whose task it was to *preach indulgences*, meaning to collect money from the Faithful who generously donated in the belief that they would shorten the time in purgatory both for their already dead relatives and their own after their death. Let me quote the German jingle used when collecting money: It goes: *Sobald das Geld in Kasten klingelt, alsbald die Seel in den Himmel springt* which means, "as soon as the money tinkles in the collection box, the soul leaps up into heaven", which is not a bad advertising slogan for the medieval mind, when you think about it.

The point is that even before Luther came on the scene perceptive theologians could see that the practice was very questionable, but it was dangerous to defy papal authority. There were certainly murmurings against it, but no one had the courage to speak out until Martin Luther. He had both the courage and the theological acumen to do so. And as history records he was excommunicated for his trouble.

So whose fault was it that there was a Reformation? It was all a very big mistake. I recall a Lutheran pastor in Nuremburg once preaching that "...it was expedient for St Francis in the 11th and 12th century to come and renew the Church, but in the 16th century Martin Luther HAD to come". In a word, the great Reformer was the agent of almighty God sent to save the Church and the world from perdition, the power of the anti-Christ. The consequences were cataclysmic.

Why can one say that? During the religious wars of the 16th century a compromise peace treaty was negotiated in Augsburg in 1530 which contained the main principles of the Lutheran position. Then at the conclusion of the first wave of religious wars that was negotiated, again in Augsburg in 1555, the hundreds of Germanic principalities were split up, some becoming RC and some Lutheran, on the principle of *cuius regio, eius religio*. That means the subjects had to follow the religious allegiance of their prince. And if they did not like it they were supposed to have the right to migrate to

another principality where the confession of the prince suited them. That is why to this day you have some areas of Germany that are predominantly RC or predominantly Lutheran (or reformed). And it is also the basic reason why in the 19th century German Protestants began to settle in South Australia, but that is another story.\

Augsburg in 1980

Now as recently as 1980 to commemorate the 450th anniversary of the Peace of Augsburg a remarkable meeting took place in the cathedral of Augsburg which is historically a most memorable place because one half of the nave is Lutheran and the other half Papal under the same roof. And the meeting was set up by the *Joint RC/Lutheran Commission of the Vatican Secretariat for the Promotion of Christian Unity* and the *Lutheran World Federation*. In a joint statement called *All under one Christ* the Roman Church conceded that the Lutheran statement of 1530 did not conflict in any way with “Catholic” doctrine.

Let us reflect for a moment what that means. Clearly it is an admission that Luther was right in his protest against the sale of indulgences and that the ensuing wars of religion had been a gigantic historical mistake for the pointless purpose of enforcing Papal dictatorship. With the right values it was all eminently avoidable. But Rome will never say outright that it got it wrong. And this is an issue today for many thoughtful adherents of Rome. There the powers-that-be contrived skilfully to make statements such as the one made by the Polish Pope John Paul II (Karol Wojtyla) recalling the 1980 declaration when he visited Augsburg in 1987.

At that time he announced: “It provided us with a reminder of how broad and firm the common foundations of Christian faith still are”. And he asked further, “Wasn’t

it perhaps even necessary, we might ask here in Augsburg, in accordance with God’s unfathomable wisdom, for religious schisms and religious wars to occur, in order to lead the Church to reflect and review its original values?”

There was no mention of the questionable theological arguments or of the consequences of Pope Leo X’s personal avarice and worldly ambition in using the device of indulgences to promote Papal power in the 16th century.

The question we are still confronted with is when will Rome without reservation confront the issue of genuine ecumenical reconciliation. One thing is clear, the 16th century bull of excommunication imposed on Dr Martin Luther is still in force. We Anglicans have to try to appreciate the difficulty in which Rome finds itself, especially in Germany today where Church membership is declining at an alarming rate. But as I have long been aware, we have our own internal problems that cry to heaven for resolution. Fortunately, there are some scholars such as our very own Rector, for example, who are leading the way by virtue of their profound and imaginative research and weighty publications.

Finally we still have the epistles of St Paul that point us in the right direction: “For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.” (*Ephesians* 2:10)

So let us pick that up and follow St Paul in what he said in his letter to the Philippians: “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let all men know your forbearance. The Lord is at hand...” (*Philippians* 4:4-5)

Evensong, 19 July 2015
St Paul’s, Manuka

Reconnecting with young people

The statistics tell their own story. Over the last decade 50,000 young people a year are leaving the Church and Christian faith in Australia alone. Through the activities of “Here 2Stay”, the Christian community is being actively engaged in reversing this trend.

On 3 July more than 50 people gathered to share and discuss ways churches and Christian organisations can help young people and children become life long, active disciples of Jesus.

Those attending travelled from as far away as Cootamundra in regional NSW. Each organisation represented brought a unique perspective to the day.

By identifying 10 key areas, called pillars, Here2Stay engages with the Christian community to share ideas, discuss challenges, learn from each other and be intentional in helping young people and children become life long, active disciples of Jesus.

The conversation began with a reminder of the urgent need for the Christian community to engage and connect with our community in order to share the Good News and help grow lifelong followers of Jesus.

It was greatly encouraging to hear from others about what they have done to actively engage with young people, children and their communities.

In an age where more people are leaving the Church and the Christian faith, we must engage with our neighbours, sharing the life giving message of Jesus with them.

Not only that, we must be diligent in living alongside them, teaching

them and helping them to be life-long disciples of Jesus.

The statistics don’t lie. We’ve done well to share the Gospel with young people but we’re poor at helping them learn how to be disciples.

For young people to become disciples they not only need to know the big story of the Bible and have an encounter with Jesus, they also need opportunities to serve in mission and learn to respond with compassion. They need broad generational connections, adults who can mentor them and positive peer communities.

This is what Synergy is all about, helping young people and children meet Jesus and helping parish members, to help them become lifelong disciples.

Andrew Edwards

SERVICES

St Paul's

Sunday Services

7.00 am Holy Eucharist (Book of Common Prayer)

8.00 am Holy Eucharist (A Prayer Book for Australia)

10.00 am Holy Eucharist - Sung (A Prayer Book for Australia)

Choral Evensong

6.00pm Service of Choral Evensong on the third Sunday of the month, February to November

Prayers for Healing—

on the second Wednesday of the month immediately following the 10am Eucharist

Weekday Services

10 am Wednesday- Holy Eucharist

St David's

Sunday Service

8.30am - Holy Eucharist

Weekday Service

10 am Thursday- Holy Eucharist

ST PAUL'S PARISH COUNCIL

Members of St Paul's Parish Council are:

The Venerable Dr Brian Douglas (presiding member), the Rev'd Susan Bridge, the Rev'd Canon John Campbell, Dr Ingrid Moses (Rector's Warden), Robert Deane, Peter McDermott (People's Wardens), Catherine Bohm, Christopher Deane, Peter Cumines, Sandy White, Mary Pollard (Parish Councillors), Duncan Anderson, Lorraine Litster (St. David's Wardens), Tony Ralli (Rector's appointment). Helen Raymond. (minute taker)

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Copies of *Slipping the Moorings* are available for \$30 from Katherine Collins, Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture.
Email: kcollins@CSU.edu.au,
or Tel: 0262726203

OUR EDITORIAL PURPOSE

In the service of the Parish, and recognising that communication is at the heart of our identity as a church, *Community* aims to connect people with God, with each other and with our wider community by sharing experiences through reflective dialogue.

Community seeks to create a sense of encounter and belonging, to build relationships within the church and beyond, to recognise the capacity of religion to nourish individual lives, and to reflect the unique position of St Paul's and St David's in the life of the Diocese and the nation.

It will do this through stories of the Parish, the Diocese and the wider Anglican communion that report, inform, and enlighten in ways relevant to its readers and be a window for others beyond the church to observe our participation as a vibrant Christian community.

As the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, said: "We believe in a God who speaks and calls, seeking to communicate more fully and effectively".

Community seeks the engagement of readers and contributors to reflect the richness and diversity of the Parish and to honour and proclaim an expression of faith in our life together.

Community

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