

St Paul's Ginninderra Digest



Rev Doug Newman

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**April Editorial
Deadline
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Rector's Message

Christmas is behind us and 2010 stretches before us. Congratulations to Haydn, Joanna and Cath on the arrival of Jarrod William and to Ben and Julia for Sofia Anna. Congratulations also to Sue, Bela and Paula on becoming Grandparents. As usual we have a study to focus us through Lent as we look to Easter in early April this year. On the Move will follow closely on 14 – 16 April.

As we continue deeper into Lent and Easter looms let us remember that "It is Friday ... but Sunday is coming". This one of the more memorable Easter sermons I have ever heard. Google it and listen on Youtube (Campolo: Sundays coming). Campolo speaks of the hope we have, because of the resurrection, even in the midst of our troubled times and sorrows. To end on Easter Friday leaves us with a distant God who seemingly abandons us in our greatest time of need. Easter Sunday reveals that God has been with us all along. But what happens when we are still facing troubled times?

We sometimes get stuck in Friday. Each day is another tale of woe, another wound to reveal, another story of heartbreak, or another grievance to bear. We can live

behind closed doors of fear and sorrow, seemingly unable to make the move to *Sunday*. Julie and I are not immune from these feelings. Ralph and Robyn led our first Healing Service for 2010 (**6pm last Sunday of the month**) and helped us all to identify our burdens and lay them down – *Come to me all you who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest!* A common theme was grief.

How can we imagine the possibility of something different. The women walking to the tomb on Sunday certainly did not expect any good news. **But we should** - we know the story, we know the ending and we can rejoice in our salvation, our promised resurrection to eternal life. **And yet** – Lent is a journey that when travelled intentionally alongside Jesus can provide us with great insight into loss of friends, of expectations, of aspirations, even of life and the grief that these naturally bring and this opens the possibility of healing. Take this season to reflect deeply on the gifts that God has given to you and how He can bring joy out of ashes of mourning – listen to one another, share those experiences and that journey.

Doug and Julie

Thought for the month

In the beginning was the Word. Stained glass church windows often picture the Gospel of John as an eagle, because an eagle can look straight into the sun without blinking, and for many people the fourth Gospel looks deepest into the heart of Christ. In John's introduction he forecasts in a compressed way what he elaborates later so that he can give us the gospel in a nutshell. John uses ideas that both Jews and Gentiles can understand when he describes Jesus as Gods Word. For the Jews, "the Word" means God's active involvement in the world, and for the Gentiles it means the divine mind. That is why his opening words are: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God (John 1.1).

Prayer Chain

St Paul's has had a prayer chain for some years. If you are not familiar with this concept, this is how it works:

If you or a member of your family or one of your friends needs prayer you telephone the person at the head of the chain, currently Shirley Purchase. She will write down the details of the situation and help you to frame a succinct prayer request that can be passed on to others in the chain. If Shirley is not available you can phone Doug. Shirley will pass your request on to the next person on the list, currently Jon Goode, and, if he is not available, will leave a message and move on to the next person, and so on. Ralph and Robyn Wall are at the foot of the list, and when they have had the message one of them telephones Shirley, to complete the chain. This way the head of the chain knows that the message has got around. The idea is to complete the chain as soon as possible. If somebody has been unreachable on the telephone they can be brought up to date later, or perhaps emailed if they are happy about this. Everyone, being aware of the essential facts, spends time in prayer for something that they would not otherwise be aware of, and of course the power of prayer is very great, especially when there are many people involved. At present there are thirteen individuals or couples on the chain. All the members love to get an update, particularly when the news is good. We have seen some wonderful answers to prayer over the years.

So please remember the prayer chain and make use of it. It is a comfort to share your needs with others and to hear words of encouragement.

Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere. Ephesians 6: 18.

Editors Note

Hi All,
My sincere apologies for the lack of words since September last year. Many things seemed to get in the way of the production process but we are now back on track.

Graeme

Always Trust in God

Dear Friends, my name is Les.

I would like to tell you a little of my problems and my darkest moments and what gets me through them.

I am a 75 year old male and since 1990 I have had a heart attack, a stroke, back operations and a knee replacement. In 1998 I got pains in my stomach. I saw my GP and had an ultrasound done that showed that I had six hydatisses in my stomach. That was a Friday and my GP booked me in for a catscan on the following Monday. On Sunday at church I told our Minister. He got a few of the congregation to pray over me and whilst praying I felt as though something blew out of my stomach. The catscan I had on Monday showed the hydatisses had been completely burnt off.

I now have degenerative disease in my spine and five disks are worn out. I have continual pain from my waist to my feet which feels like muscle being torn from my bones. In the midst of all my pain my mind keeps going back to the healing God did for me in 1998.

That proves that God is always by our side and He keeps His promises. He also helps me through every day as I pray and trust God every Day.

I hope these few lines will help you.

Always ask God to help you and I know that He will always be with you.

God Bless You All

Les

Where Do You Stand With God?

Where do you stand with God? Is your heart close to God or are you more preoccupied with other interests? We are in constant danger of not living up to our own teaching. We can become so full of our own importance that there is little room in our heart for the Lord. We stay on the right path by placing the Rule of God in the forefront of our lives. Replacing a self-centred lifestyle with selfless service for the Kingdom, directly leads to us becoming effective in our Christian witness. Always listen to God and follow his teachings in the scriptures (Psalm 78.1).

Life's Journeying

*"A broken and contrite heart,
O God, You will not despise"*

In many ways it seems to me that God gets bad press.

Whose Name is blasphemed when someone gets a fright or a severe shock? Certainly not the author of that shock. Insurance companies often will not insure against "acts of God" - a euphemism for disaster! And superficial reading of Scripture may suggest (wrongly) that God is vengeful.

Reality is different.

In my walk through life, I have found God exceedingly tolerant and forgiving. Certainly I have not borne the consequences deserving of my sinful waywardness. Rebuke and correction have come only when God could not otherwise obtain my attention. When I had lost focus and stubbornly followed my own paths.

God has been gracious and given me an intellect that seems to work satisfactorily. Certainly a combination of study, work and experience combined to give me a fairly rapid rise through the public service career path. But this is where I lost focus. Ambition became my god and I served that god well: career ambitions fully flamed by rapid promotion.

But God was gracious to me. He let me have my way.

I sought and was appointed to a position despite warnings that I would be working in "the salt mines". How true that turned out to be. What a downfall; what a disaster! My life was chaos. This ambitious young colt suddenly in a position where consistently anything I did or attempted was insufficient.. Deflation. Depression. What was I to do?

One particular morning, some two agonisingly destructive years later, I remember sitting in my lounge chair before work, completely downcast and defeated – at the end of my tether. I prayed "Lord, if there be a Lord, please get me out of this." No great prayer of faith that one. But it was sufficient for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Why?

For 37 years in the church (from babyhood) I knew all ABOUT Jesus but I did not KNOW Jesus. But my prayer, inadequate as it was, came from a heart that had lost its pride and self sufficiency. In short, the journey in Christ from my intellect to my heart had begun. I was now in close intimate relationship with my Lord and Saviour.

My turmoil vanished, consumed in quiet peaceful trust. All would be well. And it was. Within the week....but that is another story.

The Lord Bless You

2009 Operation Christmas Child

Another year of processing is finished and I am delighted to tell you that our tally for 2009 is 24,048 shoe boxes, an increase of just under 1200 on last year. This means 24,048 children will be blessed to know that someone, somewhere cares enough to send a message of hope and joy to them through the filling of a simple shoe box.

Thank you so much for the part you played in reaching out to these precious ones whether it was buying a bag of marbles, knitting bears and beanies, sewing, coordinating your group, helping at processing, praying or filling one or many shoe boxes, each part is equally as important as the other.

You will be interested to know that some of our shoe boxes have already left for Vietnam and PNG and we have the privilege of being selected to send 1500 of our boxes to the Tsunami affected areas in Samoa along with some cartons of clothing and soft toys that were too large to fit in shoe boxes. Isn't it great how nothing is wasted in God's economy? Our boxes are also destined for Thailand and Cambodia.

Thank you so much for your support, enthusiasm, encouragement and participation in what I am sure you will agree is an amazing ministry. It has been a privilege co-labouring with you again this year and I praise God for each and every one of you and the 24,048 shoeboxes.

Blessings, Anne

P.S.— St Paul's Contribution was 501 boxes.

For Love of Mike

BY JENI MURDOCK

While we rallied to Heather last October, I came to know more about Mike and respect him in a new light. Instead of chatting about doughnuts I wish I could have said something more like the following!

My last chat with Mike was also about his excitement at going 'home' to the Channel Islands for the first time in nineteen years to attend a wedding. This was the week before he left and emphasised again our mutual pommie background and understanding of 'long-distance family' even though we call Australia home. (We even worked out that day that my sister's father-in-law would most probably have gone to high school with Mike's Dad!). I little thought when I rushed round to Heather's early on the Sunday Morning he died (our time) that I would be talking to several of his family and helping Heather and Wade cross the world for the first time to a foreign place as they thought - only for them to find that they were going home to family too. No coincidence I'm sure that talking with Mike's Brothers and sisters has been just like talking with Mike and Heather.

One measure of a man may well be what he leaves behind and I have been privileged to share the heart break with his family even though he would have found so much emotion hard to accept. He was a rock for his brother in the days before the wedding when his brother's wife suddenly died. And at that funeral Mike spoke very clearly about never wanting any fuss – just as he had lived his life. One of his mates at the Memorial Service on Friday asked me (with improbable tears) what he was going to do without Mike who had been his rock this year since his wife had died.

The Irish undertaker Mike got to know in Jersey during the sad days before the wedding, turned up to meet Heather and Wade a week later wearing an akubra – which would have tickled Mike's sense of humour. More telling though is what he added in his own paragraph of sympathy at the end of the funeral notice that went into the Jersey paper for Mike.

Rock is an image that fits with Mike's identification with the sea. Not only line fishing, he was a trawler man off the Scottish coast. If like me, you have enjoyed the recent trawler man series on television, you will know it is not for the faint-hearted and yet Mike loved it. By itself that title would be a measure of a man, and yet he lived a life to capacity with several other 'careers of a lifetime' in equally tough conditions. He grew up on a farm in war torn Jersey, worked as a butcher in the Western Australian Mining districts, and became a glazier and carpenter on a myriad building sites on the East Coast to prove courage and endurance as much as versatility. And like a rock he is mourned as deeply by adopted family as by his own.

The quandary of where Mike should finally be laid to rest has been decided for both sides of the world. But when he was applying for a passport Heather said she wished he had applied to be naturalised at the same time. From what I have learned this month I feel like adding whenever Heather says *Mike was a man's man*and a dinky-di one for sure

Just Joking

The monks at a monastery found their clothes were faded from working long hours in their vegetable garden so they decided to dye them. Having no money, they boiled up leaves as a dye. To their horror, the garments came out stiff as boards. That evening they were summoned to appear before the abbot. Admonishing them, he said, "I can't understand how you could be so foolish. You live a cloistered life, but surely you must have known that old habits dye hard".

What's Happening

16th March—Parish Council meeting
 ??th April—Men's Breakfast—TBA
 20th April—Parish Council Meeting
 18th May—Parish Council Meeting
 20-25th May—Men's Cursillo—Galong
 28th May—Soiree—7-10pm
 10-13th June—Women's Cursillo—Galong
 15th June—Parish Council Meeting
 20th July—Parish Council Meeting
 ??th July—Men's Breakfast—TBA
 17th August—Parish Council Meeting
 27-29th August—Women's Kairos Outside