



there must be  
more to **life...**



Discover  
Jesus.

Greetings,

March continues our Lenten journey toward the days of the Passion and Resurrection. Our Gospel readings illustrate our theme of *“Jesus challenges us”* and how Jesus in his interactions challenges both the expectations of the authorities of his day, and the expectations of those around him. We are reminded of choices we are called to make as Christians – which might actually run counter to the “norms of the day” – the actually radical nature of discipleship. Jesus also asks us to enter into the paradox of “dying” so as to “live.” How will you highlight these themes in your preaching? What quotes and material will you include in your Pew Bulletins? Will you find articles/links you can put up on your Facebook pages and websites? This is heady, but exciting stuff!

We welcome Peter Chapman as a member of the task group, and look forward to his ongoing contributions – and for starters -

**FINDING THE RIGHT PUBLIC SPACES** – a story from Peter Chapman

Recently there has been a trend in communities where they have developed spaces for public occasions - McLaren Vale has a tiered Plaza in the main street; Willunga has the Market space; and Aldinga has a green area between the new Library and the shopping centre. These are places open to the public to use for events. These are the spaces we too can use to celebrate our Lord and invite the public to join in with us.

I have managed several times to have a local person share their story. When local people in the same community see someone they think they know; then see their faith from a different perspective, the message is brought home in a truly significant way. People can relate to that, because old Joe blow is just like them, and if they relate to that then they are more open to accepting Christ as part of their lives; and they see the sincerity in it too.

### **The month ahead:**

Naturally planning will involve preparations for Palm Sunday, Holy Week and the Triduum (Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, & the Easter Vigil/Easter Day). There are proper liturgies for each of these days, and they may be found here:

[www.anglican.org.au/data/Passion\\_or\\_Palm\\_Sunday.pdf](http://www.anglican.org.au/data/Passion_or_Palm_Sunday.pdf)

[www.anglican.org.au/data/Maundy\\_Thursday.pdf](http://www.anglican.org.au/data/Maundy_Thursday.pdf)

[www.anglican.org.au/data/Good\\_Friday.pdf](http://www.anglican.org.au/data/Good_Friday.pdf)

[www.anglican.org.au/data/Easter\\_Vigil.pdf](http://www.anglican.org.au/data/Easter_Vigil.pdf)

And look at the Church of England's site as well: [www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/common-worship/churchs-year/times-and-seasons/easter-liturgy#p418](http://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/common-worship/churchs-year/times-and-seasons/easter-liturgy#p418)

Some other opportunities and considerations for March:

**March 11<sup>th</sup> – Laetare Sunday/Mothering Sunday/Refreshment Sunday:** Preparation of Simnel Cake, and of posies. Mothers could be invited to church? Shared hospitality offered on the day, with families invited? Simnel Cake and posies taken to women who have been mothers and who are isolated, in care/hospital? This doesn't preclude Simnel being given to the dads either! Having a shared meal – church folk & invitees? This is also the Sunday for Rose Vestments - if you have them.

[www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/christianity/holydays/motheringsunday\\_1.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/christianity/holydays/motheringsunday_1.shtml)

**March 19<sup>th</sup> – St. Joseph's Day:** The foster father/guardian of Jesus. Is there the possibility of using this day to honour fathers in some way? A Lenten gathering? Reflections on parenthood? What about a men's Breakfast with sons and a guest speaker (perhaps a Christian footy player)? It could be held in the town community hall. Also, have a local person share about their faith journey connecting it with a father-son theme.

**Palm Sunday:** There is the Palm Procession. This can be an occasion for a public procession - joining with other Christian communities? Shared Blessing of Palms in a public space and then processions to the individual churches (often easier if churches are relatively near to each other). Do you have access to a Donkey? This is also a good children attractive activity (but perhaps they would have their own Liturgy of the Word or activities paralleling the adult's one with the Passion Gospel?). Palm Crosses/fronds might be taken and given during pastoral visiting during Holy Week. Over many years Loxton has done this as a combined churches event. From its simple approach in the beginning, it has developed into a town tradition where many people attend. A service is held, someone local should also share about what Palm Sunday means to them.

Once the general public know about the occasion they begin to be interested and quite often (over some years) the event grows.

**Maundy Thursday:** Contrary to some popular practises, the Christian 'Passover Meal' is the Lord's Supper, not an imitation Jewish meal. See the above link for the liturgical activities associated with the Maundy Thursday liturgy. If you are interested in the Passover Meal, the more respectful activity is to contact the Synagogue/local Jewish community (easier for those close to Adelaide) and see if there is the possibility of being invited to an actual Passover Meal. If a community is unable to celebrate the Eucharist due to no priest, it might still be possible to have a Liturgy of the Word, incorporating a Foot Washing!

*Liturgical Reception of the Holy Oils on Maundy Thursday* – This may be a new item for many people, but it seeks to link the Chrism Mass celebration with the local parish, and the holy oils which have been blessed, and these same oils being used in local parish life (one might say they also signify a way in which the bishop is present at the local celebrations). Common Worship has a format you might consider using - [www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/common-worship/churchs-year/times-and-seasons/passiontide-and-holy-week#mmm172](http://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/common-worship/churchs-year/times-and-seasons/passiontide-and-holy-week#mmm172)

You will need to scroll down the page to *The Reception of Holy Oils...*

This is a day we could have a re-enactment of the Last Supper in the shopping centre / park / street / Plaza, followed by a service. Then invite people to share in the supper with you. Hand out chunks of fresh baked bread, Hot cross buns etc. Have a local person share about what the Last Supper means to them.

Aldinga does something very similar every Christmas with the Children's Christmas pageant and have a Jesus Birthday cake to share.

**Good Friday:** Again, the proper liturgy of the day is provided by the link to the Anglican Church of Australia's site. Stations of the Cross, etc., are devotionals in addition rather than in the place of the Good Friday liturgy. If you do have a separate opportunity for Stations of the Cross - consider some public possibility, even an ecumenical one (Fr Paul Devenport has a version he has used). Either use the church grounds, or significant locations around the town, with readings, singing, and prayers. Have a local person share what Good Friday means to them.

While nothing is provided liturgically, some communities with/without a priest might be interested in a reflective late afternoon/early evening devotion reflecting upon Christ in the tomb, using prayers, music, reading/s, etc. *A Prayers at the Foot of the Cross?* Fr David Patterson has a format he has used previously, or you might look at Taize material, or that in Celebrating Common Prayer (item # 5) [www.oremus.org/liturgy/ccp/15after.html](http://www.oremus.org/liturgy/ccp/15after.html)  
(This is similar to the material in Common Worship)

**The Easter Vigil:** This liturgy often falls into the “too hard” basket, with its series of readings and psalms, lighting of the new fire and the Paschal Candle, with Eucharist (and Baptism if you have a candidate/s). The Vigil was (and is) THE liturgy of initiation for the Christian year. Again, the material for the liturgy can be found at the above link. Not all of the readings need to be used, although if you have time and intent, they do provide an incredible occasion for reflection. Psalms sung/said responsorially punctuate the readings beautifully, but if there are no Cantor/singers, it is possible to find metrical versions with a bit of searching. There are also metrical versions of the Exsultet (have a look at the Common Worship link below).

**Easter Sunday:** Many that do not normally come to church come on Easter day. Do you use the Renewal of Baptismal Promises from the Easter Vigil? Here is an opportunity for reflection for visitors. You could put out an invitation for people to renew their baptismal promises (include using the Baptismal waters for the physical sensation via sprinkling!). Have a local Person share what Easter means to them.

The Church of England's Common Worship material for Easter provide some guidelines for a truncated lighting of the new fire and blessing of the Paschal Candle if that has not been possible on Holy Saturday. Also, there is material which can be worked to “Welcome” the Paschal Candle if you have blessed it at the Vigil for sister churches (this is not long and draws attention to a significant sacramental object present throughout Easter, and at Baptisms and Funerals. Have a look here (scroll down): [www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/common-worship/churchs-year/times-and-seasons/easter-liturgy#p418](http://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/common-worship/churchs-year/times-and-seasons/easter-liturgy#p418)

*An Easter Garden* – This could be something “constructed” as a Children's teaching activity? Or alternatively, some churches make quite a large garden for visitors to come and see. A variation on this can be an Easter Cross – a large cross decorated with flowers. This is St Ann’s tradition – a large basket of flowers is at the door and as people come in they take a flower and place it on the cross. After the service the cross is taken out and put in a plinth right beside the main road.

A sign outside the church could read “Christ is Risen! He is Risen Indeed!” be creative with the sign, make people take a double look (Sometimes your local Real Estate firm is happy to provide a sign for free – it is advertising for them!).

*Easter Eggs* – Do you bless the Eggs? Invite parishioners to bring their Easter Eggs to the Easter Vigil/Day Eucharist for a blessing, using the Easter water. They become a teaching opportunity with children at the liturgy in describing their significance. Another idea is to prepare hard boiled eggs and dye them, to be given to members of the congregation (probably easier with a smaller congregation!!). [www.fullhomelydivinity.org/eggs.htm](http://www.fullhomelydivinity.org/eggs.htm)

Blessed eggs might also be taken around with the Home Communion/Visiting round. There is also a tradition of blessing specially prepared Bread at Easter as well – some countries even bake it in the shape of a Lamb!

Some printable material for handouts/pew sheets preparing for Holy Week (with adaptation?)

[www.baylor.edu/content/services/document.php/217610.pdf](http://www.baylor.edu/content/services/document.php/217610.pdf)<http://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/Lent/holyweek2.html>

[www.liturgybrisbane.net.au/liturgylines/easter-triduum-the-three-great-days/](http://www.liturgybrisbane.net.au/liturgylines/easter-triduum-the-three-great-days/)

[www.anglicanjournal.com/articles/anglicans-prepare-to-celebrate-the-great-triduum/](http://www.anglicanjournal.com/articles/anglicans-prepare-to-celebrate-the-great-triduum/)

[www.olm-parish.com/Triduum.htm](http://www.olm-parish.com/Triduum.htm)

#### **An Easter Challenge:**

So in your church you only have one 80 year old who is keen to do something. Give her a big bunch of flowers, and take her to the Mall where she can hand out flowers and tell everybody “Christ is Risen!” She will be doubly blessed when she meets folks they will respond “He is Risen Indeed” and just maybe she will touch someone with the love and Grace of Jesus.

A couple of interesting and challenging links! Neither are “Christian” speakers, but their messages certainly speak into our space.

Thoughts which might enable us to think about our own places of interconnection for the sake of the Gospel?

[www.ted.com/talks/tanya\\_menon\\_the\\_secret\\_to\\_great\\_opportunities\\_the\\_person\\_you\\_haven\\_t\\_met\\_yet/up-next](http://www.ted.com/talks/tanya_menon_the_secret_to_great_opportunities_the_person_you_haven_t_met_yet/up-next)

The radical nature of love and forgiveness!

[www.ted.com/talks/valarie\\_kaur\\_3\\_lessons\\_of\\_revolutionary\\_love\\_in\\_a\\_time\\_of\\_rage/up-next](http://www.ted.com/talks/valarie_kaur_3_lessons_of_revolutionary_love_in_a_time_of_rage/up-next)

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