

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



*Discover  
Jesus.*

Greetings,

*Jesus goes beyond our limitations – Corpus Christi – Jesus gives us his very body and blood; Jesus surprises us – the parables of the Kingdom is our theme for the month of June.*

The past few months have included a considerable amount of liturgical material – partly because they have coincided with Lent and Easter, and many places are not aware of the resources which are available to enhance their worship in these seasons. While some might consider such material a bit ‘in house’ if we are trying to encourage our people to engage with those around them in their communities, either individually and/or communally, at some point along the line, worship becomes the focal point of meeting between the ‘church’ and God! We belong to a deep and long tradition of worship as Anglicans (not as Hill Song, C3, The Edge, etc. although there might be insights which can inform us!). At a local level there is the invitation to dive into the riches of our faith in terms of worship and enable others to encounter something of the mystery of God as well. If a person in the pew hasn’t encountered the majesty and mystery of God, it is unlikely they are going to have much to share?

As we move ahead, after the intensity of the Lent/Easter season, we move into the ‘Ordinary’ or ‘Pentecost’ season of the Church year. (NB – Ordinary, not because we calm down into the hum drum of the year ahead, but Ordinary because the season is ‘ordered’ or numbered, giving a sense of purpose and growth in the day-to-day. The Australian Anglican use of Sundays after Pentecost gives another hint at this time of year – we are to grow in the Christian life nourished by the ongoing presence of the Holy Spirit.)

June does have a number of Festal celebrations; some will observe Corpus Christi (the Thanksgiving for the Institution of the Holy Communion) on the Sunday following 31<sup>st</sup> May. There are also St. Barnabas’ day, 11<sup>th</sup> June, the Nativity of St. John the Baptist, 24<sup>th</sup> June and at the end of the month, the Feast of SS. Peter & Paul, 29<sup>th</sup> June. Liturgical material for use on these occasions is attached. Where these days might be Patronal Festivals, they can also be days of celebration, not only for a congregation, but an opportunity to invite friends and community – especially if you attach some sort of social gathering or meal!

Jasmine Irvine has provided some helpful suggestions for the month as well on a slightly less liturgical note. There is the long weekend for Queen Elizabeth’s Birthday, 11<sup>th</sup> June, why not celebrate? This could include special prayers during the Sunday service (for the Queen, Royal Family, years of service, good governance, the Commonwealth??) or something else. Attached is a poster with suggestions such as a High Tea, Picnic, Barbeque, Games, or Fancy Hat Competition. These could be held indoors or outdoors, in the church grounds or at the local park, and it could be a great opportunity to invite people that might not usually attend church.

The Winter Solstice is on the 21<sup>st</sup> June this year. This could be a good opportunity to have a dinner and/or a bonfire if there is an appropriate space or someone in the congregation with a suitable area. (NB – In Europe, St. John’s Eve was the occasion of celebrating the Summer Solstice – Winter for us – with bonfires, etc. A combining of the religious and seasonal – perhaps you could plan something similar? How about bonfire, mulled wine, and warming food? – An occasion to invite people to gather?)

If areas choose to do anything like the above that could be ways to encourage people to come along to a “church event” then it is important to promote the events, through websites, Facebook, posters on noticeboards/in shop windows, or newspapers – as well as the important personal invitation!

Reflecting on our theme of *Jesus goes beyond our limitations* some of our readings in June bring us to encounter some of the parables. It is good to access helpful reading on the parables. Often the way we have interpreted them have tamed their implications! In their own context and time, the parables surprised their audience.

Some good, but standard books are:

- Kenneth Bailey, **Poet & Peasant and Through Peasant Eyes: A Literary-Cultural Approach to the Parables in Luke** – while looking at St. Luke’s presentation, his study helps with looking at the parables over all.
- Archibald M. Hunter, **Interpreting the Parables** – an accessible and brief survey of the parables.
- Robert Farrar Capon, **Kingdom, Grace, Judgment: Paradox, Outrage, and Vindication in the Parables of Jesus** – written by an Episcopal priest scholar.

There are a multiplicity of other books as well.

Also attached are a couple of articles which might be of interest as we delve into the Gospel of Mark this year, as well as journey with St. Paul in the epistles. The Henri de Lubac article is a reflection on Paradox.

Again, if you have ideas to share, please send them to us so they can be circulated to the wider Diocese.

Best wishes for the month ahead,

DP

Fr David Patterson  
(Chair of Diocesan Task Group)