

# DIOCESAN UPDATE

## ANGLICAN CHURCH, DIOCESE OF THE MURRAY

### EASTER 2009

#### EASTER REFLECTION

Jesus is our dying and rising God. This short sentence draws Christmas and Easter together. At Christmas we adore Jesus, the new born King, Son of God and Son of Mary. The Creed we say each Sunday affirms that Jesus is 'God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten not made, being of one substance with the Father.' This statement is at the very heart of the Trinitarian faith of the Church. Jesus, the God/Man is one with the Father. Yet he is born of Mary by the power of the Spirit. He is fully human too. It is this Jesus who suffers in the flesh, dies, and is buried. The resurrection of Jesus is in the flesh not just the spirit. The tomb is empty. Jesus is both able to be recognised but also not expected and so able not to be recognised. The disciples on the road do not expect to encounter Jesus whom they witnessed dying. Mary Magdalene confuses Jesus with the gardener. Thomas does not recognise Jesus until he sees the marks of the cross in his hands. Others believe he is risen even before they encounter him and others witness the resurrection on that first day in the upper room and just accept it. In a sense the divinity of Jesus lies hidden in his earthly life. It is revealed at the resurrection. The only time it is glimpsed before Easter Day is at the Transfiguration. Some begin to recognise in Jesus more than a mere rabbi or peripatetic prophet. They hear his teaching and marvel. They witness his healing and ponder the power of God in him. Yet according to John's Gospel it is only when Jesus is lifted up on the cross in his broken humanity that his divine love shines so strongly that we are drawn to him and believe. The hidden nature of Christ's divinity in his earthly life is very telling. Jesus called himself, Son of Man. It is as if only in him is true humanity displayed. It is the perfect obedience of Jesus which demonstrates his oneness with the Father. He only does what the Father commands

and says. He exhibits in his flesh the perfect selfless love of God. The resurrection is not merely a proof or a vindication of Jesus but the logical conclusion of a human life so attuned to God in its very being, that death could not hold him. And this brings us back to Christmas again. In his very being Jesus is fully God and fully man. By using the word 'man' what is being stated in the 'double entendre' of the English word, 'man', is that Jesus an actual man in his DNA is also fully human in the way men and women are both human. In his human manhood God is fully revealed. God fully displays his love and in his transformed flesh Jesus rises. He becomes the Pioneer (as Hebrews says) where he goes; we hope and pray to follow. *A blessed Easter to you all, + Ross TM*

#### Clergy and Parish News

Fr **Bruce Cliff** has retired from the Parish of Naracoorte and will retire into the Parish of Mt Barker. He has been granted a PTO Licence by the Bishop. Naracoorte has been considering its patronage and some meetings have occurred. Bishop Ross chaired the Annual Vestry at the end of March.

Fr **Dennis Eales** has indicated his retirement from the PD of Southern Vales from early June.

Fr **Mark Boughey** will be Licensed by Bishop Ross as Rector of **Onkaparinga Valley** at St Mark's Woodside on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> April at 7:30 pm. Mark and his wife Kerry and their two sons, will move into the new Rectory almost completed next to St Thomas' Balhannah. Fr Mark is returning to The Murray after having served in the Dioceses of Adelaide and Gippsland. He was formerly Rector of Victor Harbor and Waikerie, serving a curacy at Naracoorte.

Bishop Ross has appointed Fr **Durham Clarke** as PP of **O'Halloran Hill** after Parish Council asked the Bishop to suspend patronage for one year. Fr Durham formerly Priest Assistant at Mt Barker began in early Lent. The Rectory has been totally and beautifully restored by a team of laity under the leadership of Warden **David Sincock**.

Bishop Ross chaired the Annual Vestry in the Parish of **Happy Valley** in February. The vestry petitioned the Bishop to seek a report into the length of time (now 22months) since the Rector was stood down for the professional standards investigation. The Bishop has sought consent from the Director of P S and form of what may be reported to the parish and diocese.

**Strathalbyn** Patronage Committee is convened and working as is the Committee for **Mt Barker** after the resignation of Michael Whiting as the Locum Tenens. Fr Michael has taken up an appointment as Chaplain to the Archbishop.

Fr Chris St John PP of Yankalilla suffered a mild stroke in late March whilst interstate. He is recovering well and will return to his ministry when doctors have given permission.

The parishes of **Berri/Barmera, Renmark and Loxton** are to enter negotiations after Easter on the Bishop's proposal for the formation of a Regional Parish.

#### ORDINANDS IN TRAINING

The Reverend **Paul Devenport** (in Deacon's orders) continues his training under the Rector of Mosman, Diocese of Sydney and our own Director of Training, Fr Carlsson.

In October last year the Bishop accepted Mr **Cameron Doody** for the Diocese. Cameron has already gained a B.Th. He has been placed on an Archbishop's Licence in the Parish of North Adelaide. This parish will provide him with three years stipendiary training as a catechist, deacon and newly ordained priest. He will be ordained in The Murray and licensed by the kind favour of the Archbishop until he has completed

his time as a curate and then come to The Murray for his first parish. Cameron is currently 25 years old.

**Synod** will meet on Friday 22nd May from 5 pm for Divine Worship and then on Saturday 23rd until Lunch in various venues in Goolwa. Elections for lay representatives have taken place at Annual Vestries and so this year will be the first session of a new triennium. All appointed and elected offices in the Diocese lapse with the new triennium and so Synod will elect reps for a new DC, other elections and the new DC will also appoint new committees and officers in June.

#### DIOCESAN COUNCIL UPDATE

DC met last on 26<sup>th</sup> February. The Bishop being unable to attend the Vicar-General, Bishop Smith took the Chair. **See Fund** (229/10). The incorporation of the Fund is still progressing without conclusion yet. Parish of Mt Barker (229/11) Permission granted to sell or transfer the portion of its land being an area of 1980 square metres situated at Stephens Street, Mount Barker at the rear of the Church, Hall and Rectory for a sum not less than \$1million, The proceeds of sale: 25% for the See Fund, repairs to Christ the King Mount Barker Church, renovations to the Parish Hall Mount Barker and essential repairs and upgrades to church property. **Loxton Rectory** (229/12) It was resolved that the matter of the sale of the Loxton Rectory be deferred pending further investigation by the Vicar-General and that the Synod Solicitor attend if needed.

The Synod of the Diocese of The Murray of the Anglican Church of Australia Incorporated.

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