



Lent to Easter 2014

A reflection on Lent

It has been said that the purpose of the liturgical year is to bring to life in us and around us, little by little, one layer of insight after another, until we grow to full stature in the spiritual life (Joan Chittister, *The Liturgical Year: The Spiraling Adventure of the Spiritual Life*). In the seasons of the liturgical year, Joan Chittister says, we find “what makes life matter by following Jesus through every element of it”.

Lent, the part of the liturgical year we now begin, revolves around penitence and sacrifice. By the year 330 AD, a Lenten season of forty days was established in the early Christian church, and then as now, it was a time of preparation. Every year, Lent calls us to renew our commitment to what the death and resurrection of Jesus means to us in our lives. This demands both a honing and a healing of the soul. Lent invites us to stop for a while, to reflect on who Jesus is for us, here and now, and begin again our spiritual life refreshed and reoriented.

According to some sources, the Christian practice of fasting for forty days emerged out of respect to the forty days Jesus spent in the wilderness (Mark 1:12-13). The asceticism of self-denial is common to all major faith traditions. It confronts us with the tensions between self-control and self-satisfaction, and enhances spiritual concentration. As Chittister says, “Lent enables us to face ourselves, to see the weak places, to touch the wounds in our own soul, and to determine to try once more to live beyond our lowest aspirations”.

In his writings on Lent, Rowan Williams reminds us how Lent began. In the earliest centuries of the Church, newcomers to the Christian community were baptised at Easter and they had to be prepared for this, by instruction, prayer and through self-denial. It was believed, Rowan Williams writes, that self-denial, fasting and prayer limbered you up, as it were, making you more spiritually agile. For us all, as we prepare for the approach of Easter Eve, and the renewal of our baptismal promises, Lent is a time for reflecting on and renewing our Christian commitment.

Rowan Williams also reminds us that the word ‘Lent’ itself comes from the old English word for ‘spring’. He writes:

It's not about feeling gloomy for forty days; it's not about making yourself miserable for forty days; it's not even about giving things up for forty days. Lent is springtime. It's preparing for that great climax of springtime which is Easter – new life bursting through death. And as we prepare ourselves for Easter during these days, by prayer and by self-denial, what motivates us and what fills the horizon is not self-denial as an end in itself but trying to sweep and clean the room of our own minds and hearts so that the new life really may have room to come in and take over and transform us at Easter.

A number of us in the parish will be preparing for Easter by participating in a Lenten group for the six weeks leading up to Easter. Each week we will gather together in God's presence, with listening hearts and minds open to the power of God's word. We will contemplate a Gospel text each week, watching as Jesus experiences all that it means to be fully human, praying together that we might find through this our own fullness of life, our own transformation. We will find the keys to this transformation not by escaping our humanity, but by facing it, and embracing it. We will do this together, in community, listening for the gentle whisper of the Spirit of God.

There are other resources that our vicar Dianne has made available for everyone to take home. These will guide you as you enter more fully into the Lenten journey. Ask Revd Dianne or Revd Sharne if you would like more information.

As we prepare for Easter, let us pray:

Let us open ourselves this Lent to the path Jesus marks for us, with the courage to make space, to go into the desert, to explore the never-never land of our faith, within and beyond ourselves, that God may make of us the image of the beloved one. Amen.

Rev'd Sharne

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Acknowledgment and thank you to Graeme Dellora, Rowena Ferguson, Judith Gibson, Allan Washington, and Jane Scoble for the photos in this issue.

Any suggestions and feedback to helenedur@netspace.net.au

From the Registers:

Deaths:

13.01.14

Dorothy Annie Thompson

14.01.14

Phyllis Edna Hovey

18.01.14

Richard Alan Coyle

03.02.14

Frederick Leslie Goldsworthy

22.02.14

Marjorie Poulton



Our Vicar, Rev'd Dianne with
Assistant Curate
Rev'd Sharne Rolfe

HOLY WEEK & EASTER SERVICES TIMES 2014

PALM SUNDAY – 13TH April

9:45 am

THE LITURGY FOR PALM SUNDAY
(Joint Service)

MONDAY – 14TH April

7:30 pm

HOLY COMMUNION

TUESDAY – 15TH April

7:30 pm

HOLY COMMUNION

WEDNESDAY – 16TH April

10:00 am

SERVICE OF RECONCILIATION
with Anointing and Holy Communion

7:30 pm

SERVICE OF RECONCILIATION
with Anointing and Holy Communion

MAUNDY THURSDAY – 17TH April

7.30 pm

THE EUCHARIST OF THE LAST SUPPER (Sung)
with Foot Washing and Stripping of the Altar

GOOD FRIDAY – 18TH April

9.00 am

THE CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S PASSION
(Sung)

4.00 pm

with Veneration of the Cross
THE STORY OF THE CROSS
(Children's participation)

HOLY SATURDAY – 19TH April

8.00 pm

THE EASTER VIGIL (Sung)

EASTER DAY - Sunday 20TH April

7.45 am

HOLY COMMUNION (BCP)

9.00 am

SUNG EUCHARIST OF EASTER DAY

10.30 am

CONTEMPORARY EUCHARIST
(Children's participation)

**Ever considered
making a bequest to
the
Parish in your Will?
Need more details,
then please speak to
one of the Wardens.**

What is a carbon fast for Lent?

(From the Anglican Communion Environmental Network)

For Anglicans, Lent is the time when we remember the 40 days that Jesus spent in the wilderness, facing challenge and temptation. It is a time when we reflect on God's purpose for our life. Many Anglicans take this opportunity to fast from coffee, alcohol or chocolates. However, this year our challenge is deeper, to take a carbon fast - to reduce the use of carbon based fuels on which we all depend. We will take small steps for a more sustainable world, and by doing so rediscover a different relationship with God, with Creation and with one another. Because I can only change the world a little in 40 days... I can change myself a lot!

From Ash Wednesday, 5 March, to 12 April is a time of reflection and action. Anglican Communion Environmental Network has provided a theme with a prayer, a resource to read or watch, actions to take as an individual, some suggestions of community actions you can take and something you can consider doing to change the system.

However, I can take a carbon fast – for a week if not from Ash Wednesday

Be inspired by Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu: "Love the earth just as much as God does."

There is a sea vast, and spacious, teeming with creatures beyond number— Living things both large and small. There the ships go to and fro.

Learn: Try to calculate how much meat you eat each week/month. Remember that 'a kilogram of steak could be responsible for as many greenhouse gases as driving a car for three hours while leaving all the lights on at home (Source: UN)

At Home: Buy energy-efficient appliances. If you're buying a washing machine, refrigerator, dishwasher or oven, buy the most eco friendly and energy-efficient model you can afford.

In Community: Lean on a neighbor. Carpooling saves money and the environment. Organise to car pool to work next week with your neighbours, colleagues, friends or fellow churchgoers.

(An interpretation of verses 25-26 Ps.104)

Meat Free Monday
Monday, 24 March

Tuesday, 25 March

Wednesday, 26 March

SHARE: where does your electricity come from? Find out if your Government has plans to depend increasingly more on renewable energy such as wind and solar power, and less on coal, nuclear power or shale gas. Write a hand written letter to a politician outlining your concerns.

LOCAL: Learn about your neighbourhood. Is it possible to generate solar or wind power in your area? What would the process of utilizing these resources look like for your community or your own home?

EARTH HOUR

GLOBAL: Today Earth Hour happens from 8.30 to 9.30 pm. Switch off all electrical appliances, lights, etc. for one hour. Gather friends this evening to share a meal, that does not require electricity to prepare, and enjoy the hour of darkness together.
<http://www.earthhour.org/>

SABBATH

Is your church an eco-congregation? An eco congregation is a faith-based community that makes a commitment to live sustainably on earth in response to the wisdom of sacred texts and faith traditions. Find out more by contacting the A Rocha office in your country.

<http://www.ecocongregations.org/>

Thursday, 27 March

Fish Friday
Friday, 28 March

Saturday, 29 March

Sunday, 30 March

(Suggested by Dr Irene Donohoue Clyne)

Dildar's Story

Dildar was the leader of the gang. They were tough guys, they knew the karate moves and could transform the kicks and boxes into wild street-fighting. They were the Christians and across the other side of town, the M boys lived; they formed the rival gang. Revenge and hatred drove the gangs a couple of times a week across town, with stones and whatever else they could find, and they would wear their violence like a badge in their bandages and bruises.

When he was younger, Dildar was crazy about all sports, particularly karate and gymnastics. He was serious about his sport, and from a young age decided to look after his body, to train it. That meant no drugs or drinking, not even the occasional cigarette. His friends scorned him for this, but he persisted. Soon he formed a gang, about a dozen lads from his community, all good at karate and then the undisciplined fighting that it grew into. He was their karate teacher and tried hard to keep them clean. He warned them against wasting their futures by throwing away good education, and wasting themselves on the streets. But slowly, their paths ran in different directions, with Dildar pursuing study and his friends dropping out of school and college and getting into gambling, drugs and alcohol.

Seeing no future in sport, and needing to get out of the fighting scene, Dildar studied a Bachelor of Arts and took a job with a Minister from another church in town. Without

knowing it, he was being disciplined. As yet, he didn't really know God, he knew and agreed with the basics of the Christian beliefs and morals, but his heart was indifferent toward God. The minister had a group of young men whom he would take with him on his visits, and he would ask them to preach in turn. They spend a lot of time together, travelling to the towns and villages in their province. The minister used this time to teach and guide them and Dildar found himself believing and responding to the sermons he was hearing and giving! Outwardly there was little change, but he was becoming more open to the work of God's spirit in his life and wanted to grow.

He was becoming more open to the work of God's spirit

A turning point came when a friend at another church, also a minister, asked if he wanted to be baptised. In saying yes, he was deciding to take his faith seriously, to train and work on his soul, the way he had with his body as a teenager. He now actually wanted to read the Bible and started reading it at home, in his spare time, and he found he could talk with people more easily about his faith, and loved to have deep conversations with people from all backgrounds.

He was a busy man, working in a telephone company in their accounts

section, and working alongside the minister. The greatest challenges came at work, where all his colleagues were from the different faith tradition and asked him so many difficult questions about his beliefs. He set himself the task of not just studying the Bible, but their holy books too, to understand and compare them. He researched on the internet for two years and entered into many informal debates with the people around him. He was also starting to think that he might need more formal study of the Christian faith.

Dildar continued to work and completed a Masters in Business Administration, he got married and started a family. He asked the minister about doing some training to be a catechist in the church. However, his minister wanted to send him to be a full-time priest, not a part-time lay reader! So they went to the Bishop for funding, but there was none. Dildar decided he would pay himself, so with his family's support, they left their city and moved to ZBS.

In 2012 Dildar started studying a Masters in Divinity at ZBS. He has enjoyed the church history subjects best, starting with the travels of St Thomas who came all the way to the Indian subcontinent, possible even to today's Pakistan. Dildar has tried hard to learn from history about how the Christians travelled and took the Bible with them and taught others about Jesus.

Continued on page 9....

A Woman of Faith

Mary Sumner founder of Mothers' Union.

She was born in Swinton Lancashire, the third of four children. Her father was a banker and keen amateur historian and her mother was a woman of personal piety.

In 1832 Mary's mother held a mothers' meeting in her home. Her mother's faith and her women's meetings may have inspired Mary to begin Mothers' Union.

Mary was educated at home and spoke three languages. In 1846 Mary travelled to Rome with her mother and elder sister and enjoyed all the fun and excitement of becoming grown-up. Whilst there she met her future husband George Henry Sumner.

George Sumner, the youngest son of the Bishop of Winchester, like the traditional fairy prince was young and handsome. He fell in love with Mary and she with him. They could not marry immediately for George had only just come from Oxford and was having a few months holiday abroad before his ordination. Soon after returning to England he was ordained deacon and became curate at Crawley.

A year later he was ordained priest and on July 26th 1848, he and Mary were married and a new chapter of life began for them both. In Mary's writings she described her married life in these words, "the union turned out to be a most perfect and ideal one, and has been one long period of unalloyed happiness" They had three children Margaret, Louisa and George.

In 1851 Revd. George Sumner was given his father's diocese of Hampshire. Mary dedicated herself to raising her children and supporting her husband.

The story of Mary Sumner is bound with the story of Mothers' Union. Although it is true Mothers Union

started in Old Alresford, yet the dream or vision which led to its formation came to Mary at Winchester, when her first baby was laid in her arms. She felt the great sense of responsibility. Never before had she realised all that being a mother implied. Feeling ignorant and untrained, the thought struck her if this is how she feels what about mothers less fortunate than herself.



Surely something could be done for them! If only there could be some way of reaching them and binding them into a fellowship of Christian mothers, mothers who were eager and willing to learn in order that may teach their children to be followers of Jesus Christ.

Union of Mothers' meetings were held each week and very successful for many years. She soon found herself not only talking to mothers, but was persuaded to hold meetings for husbands and fathers on a Sunday evening when the Rector was taking services in a distant Parish.

1885 was a very important year for Mary and for Mothers' Union, the year of change. First the appointment of her husband as Archdeacon of Winchester, meant that they all had to move from Old Alresford to a new and very different sphere of work for both husband and wife.

Shortly before they moved an opportunity which Mary Sumner had been waiting for came about in a most surprising way. Revd George Sumner

was summoned to attend a Church Congress at Portsmouth and Mary accompanied him.

An opportunity for Mary came when the Bishop of Newcastle invited Mary to speak to the women. At first Mary was horror-struck and then overcoming her nervousness she accepted the Bishops charge. She spoke with inspiring words that lay close to her heart, the bringing into being a Mothers Union in which "wives and mothers of all classes" could be united in Prayer and with God's help raise the home life of a nation. It was obvious there was a need for such fellowship.

Within two days of the meeting Mothers Union was founded as a Diocesan organisation in the Winchester diocese, with Mrs Sumner as its president and with a Diocesan Council to direct its policy and work. For the next ten years Mary worked tirelessly, travelled from place to place addressing meetings big and small, writing letters and handing out pamphlets explaining the Aims and Objects of Mothers' Union. With tireless energy and boundless faith she planned and organised the work of Mothers' Union.

Mary Elizabeth Sumner a wonderful faithful woman; who never faltered in her efforts to fulfil her call to service and to win followers for the Lord. She made her vision come true for women all over the world. Mothers Union is now in 88 countries around the world and is still growing overseas.

(Contributed by Ros Sahhar on behalf of MU... MU meets on the 4th Monday of the month. New members are always welcome.)

The Gathered Community



The Rev'd Bob Mitchell



Occasional Music Group



Keith conducting the Choir



Burning last year's
Palm Crosses for
Ash Wednesday
2014



Christmas Services 2013



Christmas Flowers



Continued page 11

News of the Rev'd Robyn Boyd



Robyn is a past Assistant Curate at St Stephen's and St Mary's whom many of you will remember, and left us to become Vicar of Ascension, Burwood East. Late last year Bishop Bill Ray of North Queensland Diocese, invited Robyn to think about moving to Atherton in Tropical North Queensland (90 minutes south west of Cairns). She had spent a bit of time here many years ago and knew she liked the area; and so after a trip up north to check it out, and an interview with the Incumbency Committee she was duly appointed, and on Friday January 24 was inducted as the Rector of the Atherton Tablelands.

Having kept in touch with Robyn after she left our parish (we also come from the same area of Sydney and have quite a few friends in common from up there), I decided to make to trek north to share in this occasion and also take the opportunity of having a holiday in an area I had never been to. Robyn's daughter, Jen, and her husband Aaron also travelled from Melbourne for the service; as well as Fr Ian Morrison, the Vicar of Surrey Hills, who had studied at Trinity with Robyn. The Rev'd Angela Stanfield (who had also known Robyn from Trinity and is

now based in Townsville) was also there and read the Gospel during the service, as well as a few parishioners from Ascension who were there on holidays. It was a wonderful celebration and a great joy for a parish who had waited 3 years for a priest.... yes, a 3 year *interregnum!!!* I was amazed at how far people travel for events when they belong to such a big diocese. A lot of the priests who came had to stay overnight as it was too far to travel home.

The Parish of the Atherton Tablelands consists of 4 Centres (and we think the upkeep on one property is enough!) but thankfully only one Vestry! The main centre is St Mary the Virgin, Atherton and is where the Rectory is; with the smaller centres being St Mark's, Yungaburra, Holy Trinity Herberton and St Matthew's Malanda (these range from 11-20km from Atherton). There is an associate priest who takes services at 2 centres a week with Robyn taking the other two... then they swap centres the following week. I attended a service at St Matthew's Malanda which has a small but faithful congregation, and seems representative of the other 3 smaller centres (there are occasional Joint Services). There seems to be quite a lot of fundraising activities held, and the Malanda centre also has an Op Shop they run.



Quoting Robyn from an article in the Tablelands local newspaper " *A number of things bring me to the Atherton Tablelands.. a restlessness drawing me away from the city suburbs, a sense of adventure... a growing sense of God calling me to this place... I am excited to be here...*". We pray that God will continue to bless her and the people of the Atherton Tablelands parish.

As a PS... I had a wonderful 2 weeks in Queensland. I spent a night in Cairns (did the Kuranda Railway/Skyway) before going to Atherton for Robyn's induction. The next morning had breakfast with Robyn at Yungaburra markets before heading off for 8 nights in Port Douglas (visiting the Great Barrier Reef, the Daintree, Mossman Gorge, as well as just relaxing) and then came back to Atherton for 5 days with Robyn before flying home to even hotter weather than I'd had up north!

I'm looking forward to my next visit!!

Rowena

Ladies Guild

President: Janice Miller.
Secretary: Marj Collas
Treasurer: Di Scrivener



Guild AGM Chaired by
Fr Grant with Marj Collas
and Di Scrivener

Our meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month.

You are cordially invited to come and join us for a chat and afternoon tea. We would love to see you there. At our February get together Rev'd Dianne gave an interesting talk.

We will be staffing the Lions Club Opportunity Shop, 55 Wadham Parade, Mt Waverley from 7 – 11 April. Please sort through anything you may have at home that could be suitable to be donated for sale.

Items may be dropped into the shop on the 1st or 2nd of April.

When doing so could you let them know that the goods are from Stephen and St Mary's.

Your help would be very much appreciated.

The Ladies Guild will be holding a Morning Tea on Tuesday 20th May at 10 am in the Parish Centre. The cost will be \$10 per head. Frank Cresia, Executive

Director of Waverley Industries Ltd will be our guest speaker.

Waverley Industries specialises in packaging, manufacturing and catering and employs people with disabilities...Frank turned the business from making a loss to a profit

Please join us for a most interesting talk.

Janice Miller.

Palm Sunday Walk for Justice for Refugees 2.00 pm, April 13, commencing at the State Library

Maybe the walk we make on Palm Sunday will bear witness to the community's unwillingness to support the current treatment of refugees. Next time you catch the train to town, glance up at the Cathedral to see our church's public support for justice for refugees.

Continued from page 4 ..

He is interested to learn from their mistakes and asks; "Why, after 2000 years, are there still people who do not have the Bible in their language, and why are there so many people in Pakistan who do not know about their creator and saviour?" In his studies he has enjoyed looking at the work, mistakes and benefits of different movements in the history of the church. Now he is studying Asian history, and would love to be a part of continuing to spread the story of salvation throughout his land. He would love to share with his people what they have missed in their own search for salvation.

Mostly, Dildar wants to make disciples. Not "converts", but "disciples", who follow Jesus all their lives and seek to share that joy and make more disciples.

Just like in his younger days where he lead a group of young guys from the training room into the streets, he wants to teach the Christian community how to follow Jesus, and lead them to share that with the wider community. Not with kicks and stones and smashed bottles, but with the word of God—the powerful sword of the Spirit.

(Contributed by Ian Smith and taken from the Newsletter of Jenny and Steven Sonneman)

 Steve and Jenny Sonneman serving in Pakistan through Theological Training

How Do You See the Australian Bush?

When I was asked to submit an article for the Parish News about the inspirations for my paintings, my first thought was... 'inspirations are easy... I have hundreds of them in my head and most are of places I have travelled to in Australia.'

However, my application of paint and the way I interpret these images has changed dramatically over the past 8 years. I like to think I am now a Contemporary Non-traditional artist. Prior to 2006 I was a Traditional realist oil painter. Which means I strove to paint the scene presented before me as a correct copy of the image just as a photograph will do. Minor adjustments could be made to make the composition better or the atmosphere more dramatic but basically it was copying nature. I now try to interpret the scene, to capture the essence of where I am. To emphasise colour and shapes, to change the viewing point. I work in acrylics, I add texture with PVA glue and carve into wet paint to reveal an under colour. This results in a more

dynamic interesting painting. The viewer has something to consider which they are not altogether familiar with.

The two paintings are of Boab trees in the Kimberleys. The traditional painting on the right captures the scene pretty closely as I saw it. The non-traditional painting on the left was inspired by the traditional painting but my thought process was entirely different. I thought about the dramatic red of the ranges and the yellow ochre of the plains. The spirit of the area. I emphasised the Boab's starkness and the largest tree shows it is filled with water. The spinifax grass is painted as though I have a birds eye view and I have been able to include ant hills. I am content with the way my paintings are progressing but I will never stop looking for new exciting ways to apply the paint and new ideas for my paintings.

Celia Gant

When

Lord, when my prayers are like a gibber plain,
and my soul like spinifex —
drench me with a downpour of mercy!

When I take things for granted
and gratitude goes to sleep —
put a new song on my tongue
till I praise as naturally as the bellbird.

When life's abrasive pressures fray me,
loosening my hold on the Still Centre —
tell me again about sparrows and magpies,
about wild lilies and pink heath,
and the Father who knows my needs.

When my miserly soul begrudges love,
complaining about importunate people,
or hides smugly in the folds of apathy —
put into my hands a crown of thorns,
and show me again what love can make
with two pieces of wood and a few nails.

From "Australian Psalms"
Bruce D. Prewer



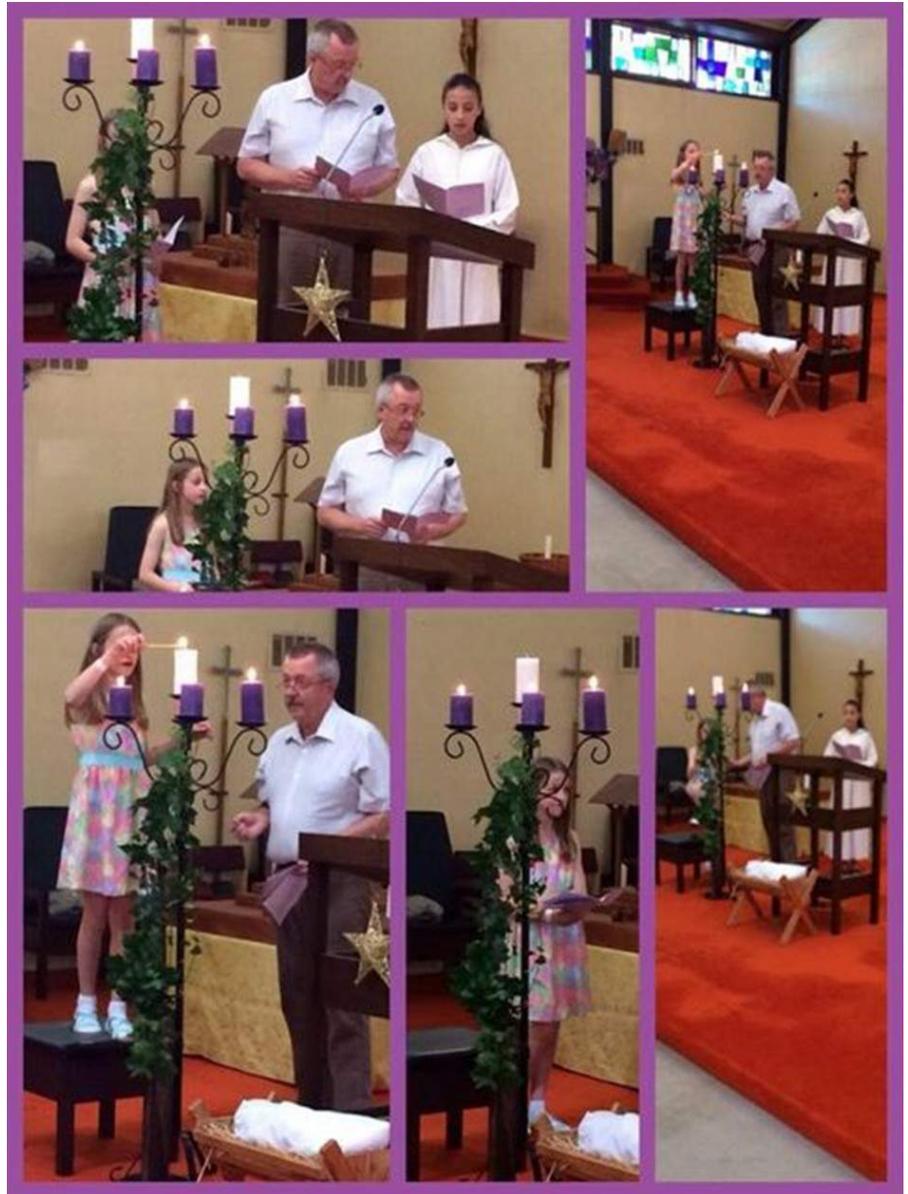
Non-traditional painting Boab trees



Traditional painting

Editor's note: To really appreciate Celia's paintings in colour please request a PDF to be sent via email. Celia is a member of the 7.45 am (BCP) congregation.

Christmas Services 2013



The lighting of the Christmas candle

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Clerical Assistant:	Barbara Aghajani	9807 3168
Parish Office:	Tuesday/Thursday/Friday/10am-1pm)	
Email:	parishoffice@stephenandmary.org.au	Fax: 9807 0978
Pastoral Care Ministry:		
Home Communion and		
General Visiting;	Ian Smith	9888 1269
Aged Care Chaplaincies	Bruce Chugg	9802 3316
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March 2014

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