



ANGLICAN BOARD OF MISSION

Working for Love, Hope & Justice

Pew
Reflections
REFLECTIONS
BGM

1 July – 29 September 2022

Readings from
An Australian Lectionary 2022
(Year C)

Written by
Robert McLean,
ABM staff member

It is with great pleasure that I present the third quarter's set of ABM's *Pew Reflections* for 2022.

It is ABM's hope that you will find that these reflections prompt and help your congregations to 'read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest' the Scriptures, and that in doing so, their faith will be deepened. We hope that you find them to be helpful.

When reading the Holy Scriptures, those who are humble and engaged in spiritual work will apply everything to themselves and not to someone else.
– St Mark the Ascetic (fifth century)

Wilnor Flores
Church to Church Program Officer

Robert McLean



This quarter's reflections have been written by Robert McLean, who has been with ABM since 2008.

Robert completed a postgraduate degree in theology from the University of Otago in New Zealand in 1996 and has been employed within the Anglican Church in various roles ever since.

How to use ABM's *Pew Reflections*

ABM's Pew Reflections are designed for you to be able to easily cut and paste them into your pew bulletins and apply your own formatting. As every parish bulletin has its own house style it is important that you use a typeface that fits into yours but as a general guide they can be formatted like the two examples below. We try to ensure that they take up about half of an A5 sheet, though some writers are more concise than others.



ANGLICAN BOARD OF MISSION *Working for Love, Hope & Justice*

Pew Reflections

Good Friday

– Friday 3 April 2015

- Isaiah 52.13 – 53.12; Psalm 22
1 Corinthians 1.18-31 or Hebrews 10.16-25
John 18.1 – 19. 42

Good Friday could be called 'Where is God day?' so often is that question posed by the various texts offered today. The answer, where it is given, is in suffering, disfigurement, on a cross, wherever we would not like to look.

- Pray for the lost and the dying. Pray too for ecumenical and interfaith relationships.
- Pray for ABM's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners, giving thanks for the work they do to further God's mission in the world.

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Pew Reflections, Third Quarter 2022

1 July – 29 September

The Coming of the Light

– Friday 1 July 2022

- Isaiah 58.8-11; Psalm 27;
2 Corinthians 4.5-6; John 12.35-47

In today's gospel reading we find Jesus urging his disciples to believe in the light so that they may become children of light. Our beliefs shape what we become. What do we believe that helps us to become faithful disciples? What beliefs hinder us from that goal?

- Jesus Christ, Light of the World, may my footsteps be guided by you, and may I believe those things which draw me closer and closer to your heart.
- Give thanks for the distinctive contribution that Torres Strait Islanders make to the Anglican Church of Australia

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EITHER

Ordinary Sunday 14C

[Pentecost 4]

– Sunday 3 July 2022

- 2 Kings 5.1-14; Psalm 30;
Galatians 6.(1-6) 7-18; Luke 10.1-12, (13-16) 17-24

In today's reading from St Luke, we read that Jesus rejoices that the Father has revealed the Son not to the 'wise and intelligent' but to 'infants'. This is wonderful news for us all. It means that everyone who has the eyes of faith can see that Jesus is the Son of God. We don't need a PhD before we begin our faith journeys.

- Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, we praise you that you have revealed the Father to us, and that you are revealed by him.
- Give thanks for the work and witness of the Church of the Province of Myanmar
- Remember the Church throughout the world in your prayers this week and beyond by downloading the worldwide Anglican Cycle of Prayer:
www.anglicancommunion.org/resources/prayer.aspx

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OR

St Thomas' Day

– if not celebrated on 21 December

– Sunday 3 July 2022

- Habakkuk 2.1-4; Psalm 117;
Ephesians 2.19-22; John 20.24-29

'My Lord and my God!' was Thomas' fervent reply upon meeting his risen Lord. Do we show Jesus the same level of excitement when he enters into our lives? Are our beliefs strengthened by an encounter with him, or do we go away lukewarm?

- Jesus Christ, my Lord and my God, may I be as excited as St Thomas when I feel your presence in my life. Help me to see where you are active, that I may praise you.
- Give thanks for the work and witness of the Church of the Province of Myanmar
- Remember the Church throughout the world in your prayers this week and beyond by downloading the worldwide Anglican Cycle of Prayer:
www.anglicancommunion.org/resources/prayer.aspx

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Ordinary Sunday 15C

[Pentecost 5]

– Sunday 10 July 2022

- Amos 7.1-17; Psalm 82;
Colossians 1.1-14; Luke 10.25-37

Today we read the well-known story of the Good Samaritan. It's hard for us to imagine how this would have sounded to Jesus' original audience as Samaritans were regarded as schismatics or perhaps even as heretics, but the thought that one of them might be good was a virtual impossibility. Nonetheless, Jesus commands his hearers, and us, to 'go and do likewise'. It means we must help those even whom we revile. It's not easy, but it is, at its heart, a simple command.

- Jesus Christ, you show me that even those I despise can teach me something, and that they are worthy of your love through me. Help me never to forget this teaching, and to love each person I meet so that I may honour you.
- Give thanks for the work and witness of CAPA, the Council of Anglican Provinces of Africa.

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NSW 1230



- Amos 8.1-12; Psalm 52;
Colossians 1.15-29; Luke 10.38-42

Today we read of Jesus visiting his friends, Martha and Mary. Martha is the ever-practical and ever-busy sister. She makes a good representative for us, with all the busyness that characterises our lives. Jesus tells her to follow her sister's example – that is, to be more focused on the moment and not to neglect things that are more contemplative and less active.

- Jesus Christ, you are the focus of our prayer. Help us to rid our lives of unnecessary hustle and bustle so that we have time for contemplation, time just to experience the moments you give us, and the experience of being with you in prayer.
- Give thanks for the work and witness of the *Nippon Sei Ko Kai*, the Anglican Church of Japan.

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St Mary Magdalene's Day
– Friday 22 July 2022

- Song of Songs 3.1-4a; Psalm 63;
2 Corinthians 5.14-21; John 20.1-18

In St John's Gospel, we read today of the encounter between the Risen Lord and St Mary Magdalen. Initially mistaking him for a gardener, Mary is then told by Jesus to tell the Eleven that he had defied even death itself, bursting its three-day prison. What a wonderful and life-changing message.

- Jesus Christ, gardener of my soul, help me bring your transformative Resurrection power to any situation that requires it in my life.
- Give thanks for the Church of Bangladesh, remembering especially today their ministry in a predominantly non-Christian context.

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Ordinary Sunday 17C
– Sunday 24 July 2022

[Pentecost 7]

- Hosea 1.2-10; Psalm 85;
Colossians 2.6-15 (16-19); Luke 11.1-13

Today in his discourse on prayer, Jesus tells us that the Father will give us not only gifts that we ask for but also the gift of the Holy Spirit. We have a generous and loving Father who always gives us those things that are good for us to have. One of those gifts is the Real Presence of Jesus himself in the Eucharist

- Jesus Christ, truly present in the Eucharist, help me to see all the gifts showered upon me by the Father and help me to fill my heart with appreciation and gratitude.
- Give thanks for the Church of South India, remembering especially today their ministry in a predominantly non-Christian context.

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St James' Day
– Monday 25 July 2022

- Jeremiah 45; Psalm 126;
either Acts 11.27-12.3 *or* 2 Corinthians 4.7-15;
Matthew 20.20-28

Today we read of the disciple's annoyance with the mother of the *Sons of Thunder*, James and John who wanted a favour from Jesus. One can almost imagine it – '... Nothing big, Jesus, just to be seated on your right and on your left in this kingdom of yours'. Jesus response to her boys, is to ask whether or not they can drink from the cup that he is about to drink, and that seating arrangements are God's choice. It puts them all back in their place, even as the two disciples pluckily respond that they are indeed able to drink from that cup.

- Jesus Christ, King of heaven, help me not to jostle for status and recognition, but rather to prove my ability, rather than just talk about it, so that your Father finds me worthy of your promises.
- Give thanks for the witness of St George's College in East Jerusalem, giving thanks for the renovations they have been able to complete while the country's borders were closed, as they now prepare for the resumption of pilgrims and courses.

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Ordinary Sunday 18C
– Sunday 31 July 2022

[Pentecost 8]

- Hosea 11.1-11; Psalm 107.1-9, 43;
Colossians 3.1-11; Luke 12.13-21

Jesus tells us the Parable of the Rich Fool – someone who wants to store up his harvest rather than worrying about the state of his soul. How can we worry less about material things and concentrate on building up our love for God and for our neighbours?

- Jesus Christ, more precious than gold or diamonds, help me to seek those things that are worthy of storing up in my soul so that I will not live to die a rich fool.
- Give thanks for ABM's networking partner, Episcopal Relief and Development (ERD), based in the United States of America.

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St Stephen's Day – Transferred from 26 December 2021
– Wednesday 3 August 2022

- 2 Chronicles 24.17-22; Psalm 31.1-8;
Acts 6.8-10; 7.54-60; Matthew 10.17-22

The story of the death of St Stephen reminds us of all the martyrdoms throughout Christian history, from his to more recent ones in places like Egypt and Iraq. Forgive us when we falsely think and claim to be persecuted when, in fact, we live in a country where persecution of Christians is virtually non-existent. Send your Spirit to remind us that a different interpretation of Scripture does not mean persecution, and to help us to be constantly vigilant against a martyrdom complex.

- Jesus Christ, strength of the martyrs, help me to live like St Stephen, so that when I die, I can also see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.
- Give thanks for the Church of North India, remembering especially today their ministry in a predominantly non-Christian context.

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The Feast of the Transfiguration of our Lord
– Saturday 6 August 2022

- Daniel 7.9-10, 13-14; Psalm 97;
2 Peter 1.16-19 (20-21); Mark 9.2-10

St Mark tells us that the disciples heard a voice from beyond the cloud, saying, *This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!* Lord, forgive us when we have not listened to your Beloved Son, when we have turned away listening to other voices. May your words ring in our ears, so that we are always brought back to Jesus.

- Help me to listen for Jesus' voice, that I may follow him all the days of my life.
- Give thanks for the work and witness of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia
- Pray for nuclear disarmament and for all who eagerly work towards peace (today is also Hiroshima Day).

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Ordinary Sunday 19C [Pentecost 9]
– Sunday 7 August 2022

- Isaiah 1.1, 10-20; Psalm 50.1-8, 23-24;
Hebrews 11.1-3, 8-16 (17-28); Luke 12.32-40

St Luke writes that Jesus tells us to be alert. But alert for what? The answer is for the coming of the master. So we should not be wasting our time doing things that do not prepare for that arrival. We should be profligate in loving others as we love ourselves. That is what Jesus wants us to do.

- Jesus Christ, King of love, help me to prepare for your coming by loving others as you would want. May love of others become a central characteristic of my life.
- Give thanks for the work and witness of the Church of the Province of South-East Asia.

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Ordinary Sunday 20C
– Sunday 14 August 2022

[Pentecost 10]

- Isaiah 5.1-7; Psalm 80.1-2, 8-19;
Hebrews 11.29 – 12.2; Luke 12.49-59

St Luke reports the advice Jesus gives us about settling with an opponent. Of course, not every argument ends up in a court case, but it is wise advice: any argument can end up backfiring and it is better to be sensible and come to an agreement.

- Jesus Christ, Judge of all, help me to avoid conflict lest I should end up hurt as well as those with whom I argue. Teach me to pursue solutions, not create problems.
- Give thanks for the Church of the Province of Central Africa, remembering especially the work of the Zambia Anglican Council.

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St Mary's Day
– Monday 15 August 2022

- Isaiah 61.10-62.3; Psalm 113;
Galatians 4.4-7; Luke 2.1-7

Today's gospel narrative tells us about the birth of Jesus – how he came into the world at a particular time in a certain place. How can we be like the Blessed Virgin Mary and make Jesus alive in our own time and place?

- Jesus Christ, Son of God, son of Mary, help me to bring you to birth here and now so that this generation may know you and the love you have for us.
- Give thanks for the work and witness of the Episcopal Church in the Philippines.

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Ordinary Sunday 21C
– Sunday 21 August 2022

[Pentecost 11]

- Jeremiah 1.4-10; Psalm 71.1-6;
Hebrews 12.18-29; Luke 13.10-17

St Luke tells us in today's Gospel reading about how Jesus healed a crippled woman. Despite this restorative act of God there was outrage from synagogue leader because the healing had been performed on the Sabbath. Where in our lives do we grumble against the good things that God has done for others?

- Jesus Christ, Healer of the sick, help me see where you have acted so that I can praise God, rather than embracing hypocrisy and futile anger. May I celebrate the wonderful things you have done for others.
- Give thanks for the work and witness of the Anglican Church of Korea, the *Daehan Seong Gong Hoc*.

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St Bartholomew's Day
– Wednesday 24 August 2022

- Deuteronomy 18.15-18; Psalm 145.10-18;
Revelation 21.9b-14; John 1.45-51

Bartholomew is also known in the gospels as Nathaniel. In the middle of a very brief encounter with Jesus he proclaims that this rabbi is not only the King of Israel but also the Son of God. May we be equally quick to discern who Jesus is and may our lives be as transformed as Bartholomew's was by Jesus.

- Jesus Christ, Son of God, King of Israel, may I recognise you throughout my life, and may I go wherever you lead me without fear or shame.
- Give thanks for the work and witness of the Anglican Church of Melanesia.

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Ordinary Sunday 22C [Pentecost 12]
– Sunday 28 August 2022

- Jeremiah 2.4-13; Psalm 81.1, 10-16;
Hebrews 13.1-8, 15-16; Luke 14.1 (2-6) 7-14

Jesus again heals on the Sabbath, at the beginning of a dinner party (vv. 2-6) and then gives a counter-cultural lesson. He tells his audience not to throw a dinner party for friends, but rather to invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind because they will not be able to repay the host with a reciprocal invitation, unlike their friends. Where in our lives and in our parishes do we welcome in those who could never repay us?

- Jesus Christ, friend of the outcast, help me to give without expecting anything in return. Help me to see your face in those whom society rejects.
- Give thanks for all those who donate so generously to ABM and AID. May God bless them for their open-handed and open-hearted generosity.

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The Martyrs of New Guinea
– Friday 2 September 2022

- Zephaniah 3.14-20; Psalm 130;
Romans 8.33-39; John 12.20-32

Jesus tells us that *unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit*. The Martyrs of New Guinea, which was then part of the Anglican Church, gave up their lives to honour their Saviour. Most of us are not called to martyrdom, but we can offer things to God that are costly nonetheless. What can we give over to God as individuals and as parishes that will bear much fruit?

- Jesus Christ, Inspiration of the martyrs, help me to offer my whole life to you, no matter what the cost, so that I will be fruitful.
- Give thanks for the work and witness of the Anglican Church of Papua New Guinea, remembering especially today the staff and ordinands at Newton Theological College in Popondetta, and the staff and students at Adult Literacy Centres around the country.

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Ordinary Sunday 23C [Pentecost 13]
– Sunday 4 September 2022

- Jeremiah 18.1-11; Psalm 139.1-5, 12-18;
Philemon 1.1-25; Luke 14.25-35

Today we read St Luke's account of Jesus addressing the crowd about the cost of being a disciple. Not only does it require forethought and detailed planning, like a person preparing to build a tower, but it also requires detachment from both family and possessions. That is not to say that relationships and material objects are bad in themselves, but that they can be distractions from the mission Jesus has for each one of us. How can we, as individuals and as a Church, leave those things behind that hinder our ability to be ardent disciples of Jesus?

- Jesus Christ, the Way, the Truth and the Life, help me to leave anything that gets in the way behind, so that I can follow your path and bring others to you.
- Give thanks for the work and witness of the Episcopal Church of Jerusalem and the Middle East.

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Ordinary Sunday 24C [Pentecost 14]
– Sunday 11 September 2022

- Jeremiah 4.11-12, 22-28; Psalm 14;
either 1 Timothy 1.1-2, 12-19a *or* 1 Timothy 1;
Luke 15.1-10

This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them. The Pharisees' jibe is something that Jesus may well have worn as a badge of honour. How lucky for us that this fellow Jesus does precisely that. Were it up to our own level of righteousness we would never be able to feast with Jesus, but that is what he calls us to do week by week at the Eucharistic feast. What a joy that is. George Herbert expresses his eagerness for the Eucharist in his 1633 poem, *The Banquet*:

Welcome sweet and sacred cheer,
Welcome deare;
With me, in me, live and dwell:
For thy neatnesse passeth sight,
Thy delight
Passeth tongue to taste or tell.

- Lord Jesus Christ, Priest and Victim in the Eucharistic feast, feed me now and forever. May I always be eager to receive you.
- Give thanks for the work and witness of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan.

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Holy Cross Day

– Wednesday 14 September 2022

- Numbers 21.4b-9;
either Psalm 78.1-2, 34-48 *or* Psalm 98.1-6;
either 1 Corinthians 1.18-24 *or* Philippians 2.5-11;
John 3.13-17

In a famous passage, St John tells us that *God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.* God wants us to have eternal life. Jesus has not come to condemn the world but to save it. This is wonderful news: God sent his Son to save us from all the evil we do. God's love is so enduring that he still expresses it for us, despite our ragefully nailing Jesus to the Cross. Forgive us, Lord, for we know not what we do.

- Jesus Christ, King reigning from the Tree, forgive me my sins and have mercy upon me.
- Give thanks for the *Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui*, the Anglican Church of Hong Kong, remembering their work and witness.

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Ordinary Sunday 25C

[Pentecost 15]

– Sunday 18 September 2022

- Jeremiah 8.18 – 9.1; Psalm 79.1-9;
either 1 Timothy 2.1-10 *or* 1 Timothy 3.14 – 4.6;
Luke 16.1-13

Today we read St Luke's account of the Parable of the Dishonest Manager. The manager is dishonest and is commended by his master for being shrewd. It's hard to know what to make of it. Nonetheless, the message at the end of the passage is clear: No slave can have two masters – if we choose to serve God then we have to accept that to serve him means having no other call on our lives. We ought not to be enslaved by materialism.

- Jesus Christ, serving you is perfect freedom. Help me to choose you as the priority in my life, for you are worth more than gold or silver.
- Give thanks for the work and witness of *La Iglesia Filipina Independiente*, the Philippine Independent Church.

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St Matthew's Day

– Wednesday 21 September 2022

- Proverbs 3.1-6; Psalm 19.1-6;
Ephesians 4.1-14; Matthew 9.9-13

Matthew, and all tax collectors, was hated by his fellow Israelites because he collected taxes for the Roman occupiers. He was regarded as a traitor. And yet Jesus called the traitor to follow him, which he did. Jesus also ate meals with tax collectors and others regarded as sinful – something which scandalised the Pharisees. And yet, they didn't seem to realise that Jesus mission was to heal people from their sin, not to reward the good, let alone the outwardly pious who could just be, as St Matthew describes them later in his Gospel, *like whitewashed tombs, which on the outside look beautiful, but inside they are full of the bones of the dead and of all kinds of filth* (23.27). How can we, individually and collectively, stop being those filth-filled whitewashed tombs?

- Jesus Christ, healer of all that is diseased and corrupt, cure me from all the sin that stands in the way between me and you.
- Give thanks for the work and witness of the Anglican Church of Kenya.

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– Sunday 25 September 2022

- Jeremiah 32.1-3a, 6-15; Psalm 91.1-6, 14-16;
either 1 Timothy 6.6-19; or 1 Timothy 4.12-5.8;
Luke 16.19-31

Today's reading from St Luke relates to us the story often known as *Dives* (which is Latin for 'the rich man') and *Lazarus* (which means 'the one whom God has helped'). It is the story of a rich man without compassion and a beggar. The story is a warning to get things in order before it is too late. Lazarus is accepted into the 'bosom of Abraham' – the founder of God's covenant people. *Abraham's bosom* was a contemporary Jewish term for the lodging place of the godly dead prior to the expected general resurrection. But it was Lazarus who was rescued by God. But for all his expensive clothing (purple cloth and fine linen were top-of-the-line couture) the rich man found himself with a permanent impassable gulf between Sheol and the unending joy of heaven. His money wasn't the problem: his indifference in the face of suffering was. As the theologian Chris Haslam notes, 'Every Jew knew the Old Testament laws commanding the compassionate use of riches, so the rich man had no excuse for his wanton neglect of one whom he saw regularly (vv. 20-21) and could have helped easily.'

- Jesus Christ, lover of the poor, let me see the needy through your eyes. Let me offer as much help as I can. Help me always to be kind.
- Give thanks for the work and witness of NATSIAC, the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglican Council.

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Michaelmas

– Thursday 29 September 2022

- either Daniel 7.9-10, 13-14 or Ezekiel 1.4-12; Psalm 138;
Revelation 12.7-12a; John 1.45-51

For those that like a little glitz and glamour with their religion – *and who wouldn't?* – the Church Calendar gives us not only the three Magi at Epiphany but also Michaelmas, the feast of St Michael and All Angels. Along with it comes some wonderful hymns that mention the angels. We live a time when on the one hand it's not fashionable to believe in angels, at least as described in the Bible, and on the other the devotees of the 'New Age' write and read literature that is filled with them. Nevertheless, angels are all around us: were it not for them, how on earth would we have managed to survive through the past couple of years. Those who worked as doctors, nurses, ambulance drivers – angels! Those who kept our shops supplied with food and who delivered it to us at home – angels! Those who developed vaccines – angels! Those who taught our children over the internet – angels! Seraphim, Cherubim and Thrones, Dominions, Virtues and Powers, Principalities, Archangels and Angels all around us, if only we would see!

- Jesus Christ, Prince of the angels, help me to see the angels around me and to join in with their ceaseless song of praise.
- Give thanks for the Church of Ceylon, which covers most of Sri Lanka, remembering their ministry in a multi-religious context.

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