

ANGLICAN MEN'S SOCIETY

The National Council in Australia

NEWSLETTER

No. 112

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FROM BISHOP JOHN STEAD – AMS National Chairman

Over the last few months I have been following an online reflection from various members of the Society of Saint John the Evangelist, an Anglican Religious Order based in Massachusetts, USA. On Thursday 8th June Brother Robert L'Esperance wrote, *I find that I have to remind myself again and again that I have no corner on the truth of God.*

Brother Robert is, I believe, paying attention to scripture, in particular 1 Corinthians 13:12 *For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known.* This verse is written in the context of 1. The primacy of love, and 2. The growth in maturity in faith (in Christ).

Now and then... There is more to know about God and God's purposes than I know now, indeed than I may ever know in this world, in this life. I get a glimpse of the truth in the account of Jesus' mission and ministry. In what he does and of equal importance how he does it and how he reflects on what he does with those who follow him. In some respects, it is in our openness, our willingness to admit that "we don't know it all" that we become receivers of God's grace and then conduits for that grace to flow toward others. John Newton's "Amazing Grace...".

Is judgementalism the natural stance of the follower of Christ? Again, the Bible is a help, in John 8:7 *When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, 'Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.'* Clearly Jesus' intent is to create the 'way' to God through following him (Jesus). It is not a matter of have I sinned as I believe this person has sinned – no! therefore I can condemn them; but rather they and I are sinners who are brought to God through grace! God acts in ways that I do not fully comprehend and draws people to himself that surprise me (maybe even annoy me).

Any time we wish to judge someone as failing to live up to a particular standard of behaviour, even when we claim it is an absolute, it would, I think, be wise to pause and reflect on Brother Robert's words and on the verse from Paul's first letter to the Corinthians.

Our choice of words, our inclination to make statements as if they are the "absolute last word" on a given matter must be made with great caution. Is the "foolishness" of the Gospel because Jesus moved away from the judgementalism of the religious authorities or because he introduced a "new" judgementalism; or is it because he dealt with people from his "servant" heart – where he loved them so that they would have the opportunity to change?

Does Jesus invite or demand? Does he bless or curse? Does he offer or require? Relationship with Jesus is transformative 2 Corinthians 3:18 *And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit.* We are all on the journey, pilgrims toward the perfection which will come our way in the Kingdom come... on earth as it is in Heaven.

Peace + JOHN

CHINA

A recent visit to China by the National Secretary and Pat, his wife, was an eye opener as we travelled via Shanghai, Yangtse river, Chongqing, Xi'an then Beijing, Shanghai and home. The huge pressure on land was the outstanding feature - mainly in cities where locals live in 36 storey buildings and elevated roadways and railways were the norm. Shanghai has worked hard to reduce pollution with Trolley buses, battery buses complete with recharging points (20 minutes to recharge a bus), CNG fuelled buses, electric scooters, bikes and small vehicles in use. Shanghai has the largest U/G metro rail system in the world.

Some idea of the land pressure can be gauged by the population of cities visited – Shanghai = 24m, Chongqing = 33m, Xi'an = 8.7m, Beijing = 25m. Due to huge traffic problems in Beijing vehicles with even rego plates operate on even dates while those with odd number plated operated on odd dates but this regime does seem to be followed strictly. Many families now have two cars, one with even plates and one with odd plates! No wonder that many Chinese are escaping to Australia!

The Three Gorges Dam first started impounding water in 2006 and is still surrounded with controversy. The weight of the stored water is thought to trigger seismic events, to changes in the underground water downstream of the Dam, siltation problems and trapping vast amounts of floating rubbish are also mentioned. It has created a large inland waterway with 30,000 tonne freighters travelling 660km upstream from Shanghai to Chongqing. With a top water level of 174.5m, when we were there in June the water level was held at 154m to provide capacity for autumn flows and ease river flooding downstream of the Dam.

However the structure is a huge (2,309m crest length x 150m high) mass concrete Dam and also has hydro power capacity of 18,200MW (26 generator sets). Large ships pass the Dam via 5 locks on the left bank (5 x 22m lift = 110m) while smaller cruise boats (<3,000 tonne) can use the new ship lift. Similar to a giant bath tub (120m x 18m x 3.5m) this ship lift can raise or lower the bath tub plus vessel 110m in 45 minutes. Fitted with massive counterweights and cables it is a triumph of mechanical engineering.

We saw a few Christian Churches in our travels and were given lunch in the old area of Beijing at a Café owned by a Christian family. Central Beijing at the Olympic venues reminded me of central Canberra – very deliberate planning controls – and very well laid out with u/g metro and u/g shopping malls. The day temperature was up 37 to 40 degrees but of an evening, when cooler, thousands of locals would walk in this area to escape their high rise apartments.

The pressure of people is ever present.

NEW BRANCH AT SOUTHPORT, QLD.

Andy Brodersen advised that the men at St. Peters, Southport have formed a branch of AMS in their Parish. There was a branch at the Southport church years ago and was the venue for a National Council meeting. Congratulations to the men of Southport.

EVENSONGS AT ST. JAMES OLD CATHEDRAL, MELBOURNE.

Sunday 23rd April saw the last Evensong sponsored by the Melbourne Executive at St. James Old Cathedral in Melbourne. This eventuated as a result of the decision to close down the Diocesan Council when a new Chairman could not be found for 2017. 25 members and friends attended the shared meal and the following service which was conducted by The Rev'd Tom Morgan, Clerical Vice Chairman, and the preacher was The

Rev'd Matt Williams, Vicar of the Parish. AMS present a cheque to the Vicar and also one to Alan Nott, AMS organist, for many years. So ends AMS's association with this Church for the last 49 years.

NEWS FROM MELBOURNE.

The Melbourne Executive have decided to close down after 107 years of activity. The final Service will be held at St. James, Old Cathedral, King St, West Melbourne at 4pm on Sunday 22nd October, 2017. The Executive does not have a Lay-President this year and it is currently meeting once a quarter.

The Annual **Book Fair** will be at H. T. Oakleigh on Saturday 8th July and the **AMS Dinner** will be held at All Saints', Mitcham on 11th August, 2017.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE – BRISBANE 8TH TO 11TH September, 2017.

This will be a triennial Council Meeting which requires the election of National Office bearers. These are National Lay Vice Chairman, National Secretary and National Treasurer. Please bring your signed nominations to the conference.

ANNUAL FEES

Diocesan Secretaries are reminded that annual fees should be paid by 30th June each year. It was agreed at the last National Council that the fees for 2017 would remain unchanged at \$20 per member. Membership return forms are available from the National Secretary.

ANNUAL REPORTS AND AGENDA ITEMS

Provincial Councils and Lone branches are reminded to send copies of annual reports to the National secretary by 1st August, 2017 for inclusion in the papers for the National Council meeting. Any agenda items for consideration by the National Council should also be sent to the Secretary by that date.

AMS WEB SITE

Trevor reports that the Web site is pretty well up to date and efforts are made to ensure that as AMS and related information becomes available it is fed onto www.amsnational.org.au There are some costs involved in maintaining the website but it is felt a worthwhile expense in helping keep AMS technologically contemporary. Those with access to the Web are encouraged to keep looking at the site for information on membership and branches and coming events. Branches which have on-line Pewsheets are encouraged to forward the web address to Trevor to establish a link via the AMS Web site.

AMS TASMANIA – Annual meeting 14th July at Christ Church, Longford.

As with most AMS gatherings these days discussion will centre on looking at programmes to attract men into AMS – indeed to attract into the fellowship of the Church. At the same time recognition will be given to the excellent work carried out by the present membership – which, though small, is very active. The likely hood is there will be several Tasmanian members signed-up to attend the National Conference in Brisbane between September 8 and 11.

NEW BRANCH IN SOLOMON ISLANDS

John Fazy who inducted into AMS at Toulkley in 2015 has been back to the Solomon Islands and reports that a new AMS Diocesan Branch has been formed in Honiara with support from the Queensland Provincial Council. Further good news is that Bishop George Takeli and some members are planning to attend the National Conference in September.

SOME THOUGHTS

- We are silent at the beginning of the day because God should have the first word, and we are silent before going to sleep because the last word belongs to God. – Dietrich Bonhoeffer.
 - The more selective you are about seeds, the more delighted you will be with the crop. - Max Lucado
 - The more you have the less you can give, and the less you have the more you can give. - Mother Teresa
 - What we do in a crisis always depends on whether we see difficulties in the light of God, or God in the shadow of the difficulties. – G. Campbell Morgan
 - We teach what we know, we reproduce what we are. – Robert Schmidgall
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BOOK REVIEWS

Margaret Court – an Autobiography HB published by Pan McMillan Aust. Pty Ltd – 2016. RRP \$44.99. An engrossing story of a top flight athlete rising from the back blocks of Albury to become the most world's most successful female tennis player and her record has yet to be surpassed. Very tough in mind and body Margaret grew in faith to become a senior pastor at the Victory Life Centre in Perth, WA following her retirement from the world tennis circuit.

Joseph Lyons – The Peoples Prime Minister by Anne Henderson – published by NewSouth Publishing – HB in 2011. Joe Lyons has been largely forgotten by Australians as he died in office in 1939 and had left the Labour party in 1931. But as PM of the United Australia Party throughout the depression for three terms of Office he restored the economy ahead of many other countries in the world. He is an unsung National hero as he put his country before the political party.

DIRECTORY OF NATIONAL COUNCIL OFFICE BEARERS.

Chairman: The Right Rev'd John Stead, PO Box 96, Gladstone, SA, 5473.
Tel: (08) 8662 2249 – Fax: (08) 8662 2027 –
e-mail: bishopsecretary@diowillochra.org.au

Clerical Vice Chairman: vacant

Lay Vice Chairman: Trevor Cowell, PO Box 22, PERTH, Tasmania, 7300
Tel/Fax: 03 6398 2507 - e-mail: trevorcowell@bigpond.com

Secretary: Ivan Holt, 3 Scarborough Road, Vermont South, Vic, 3133.
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Treasurer: Grahame Foster, 30 Upton St, Launceston, Tas, 7250
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AMS WEB PAGE: www.amsnational.org.au

Next National Newsletter will be published in October, 2017. Deadline for copy is Sat. 30th September, 2017.

Anglican Men's Society in Australia National Triennial Conference 2017

Location: Watermark Hotel

Date: 8th - 11th Sept, 2017

551 Wickham Terrace, Brisbane, Qld, 4000

Phone: (07) 3058 7333

E- mail:

Programme - 2017

Friday 8th Sept.

3.00 - 6.00pm

Registration – Afternoon Tea

5.00pm

National Executive Meeting

7.00pm

Dinner

8.00pm

Free time

Saturday 9th Sept.

7.30am

Service and song

8.00am

Breakfast

9.00 – 9.20am

Welcome & Official Opening

9.30am

Ladies tour

9.30am - end

National Council Meeting

12.00pm

Lunch

1.00pm

3.30pm – 4pm

Ladies return

6.30 – 7pm

Pre-dinner drinks & get-together

7pm

Conference Dinner – Guest

Speaker:

Sunday 10th Sept.

8am

Breakfast

9.10am

Travel to St. John's Cathedral

9.30am

Eucharist at St. John's Cathedral

12pm

Lunch at Danish Club, Newstead.

6pm

Dinner at Watermark Hotel

7.30pm

Trivia Night

Monday 11th Sept.

7.30am

Service and song

8am

Breakfast

9am

Depart for home by car, or plane.

Conference host: Andy Brodersen M 0413 191 154

e-mail: andyandaase@optusnet.com.au

**REGISTRATION FORM – AMS NATIONAL CONFERENCE
8th September to 11th September, 2017.**

Name.....
Address.....
Phone – Home.....Mobile.....
E-mail.....
I will/ will not be accompanied by my wife.....
Name for Name tags.....
Have you or your wife and special needs / disabilities? Mobility or Diet?.....

MODE OF TRAVEL

- 1. Plane/ Airline.....Flight
No.....Date.....Time.....
- 2. Private Car.....Do you require a map?.....

Note: Watermark Hotel is located cnr of Wickham Terrace and Gregory Terrace overlooking the Roma Street Parkland. Car parking available.

ACCOMMODATION

Conference at Watermark Hotel, Brisbane – Twin share.....Single room.....

Note: Single supplement is \$40 per night extra

PAYMENT

Conference (Full weekend B&B Friday, Saturday and Sunday plus lunches and dinner) –

Watermark Hotel - \$300 per head (Deposit \$100) No.....Total \$.....

Day visitors - Conference, Morning & Afternoon Teas, Lunch and Dinner - \$100

No.....Total \$.....

Conference Dinner only – Watermark Hotel – \$ 70 - No.....Total \$.....

Ladies Day Tour Saturday -\$ 50 - No.....Total \$.....

Payment enclosed:

**All cheques are to be made out to: Anglican Men’s Society Diocese of
Brisbane -**

Deposits = \$100 per person

**Then posted this form and cheque to Andy Brodersen no later than 14th
August, 2017. Andy Brodersen...Email Address...andyandaase@optusnet.com.au**

Mail Address: 3 Gabrielle Court, Collingwood Park, Qld, 4301

Phone (07) 3381 8817

M - 0413 191 154

Accommodation and Conference Venue

Watermark Hotel

Address: 551 Wickham Terrace, Brisbane, Qld, 4000

Phone:(07) 3058 7333

