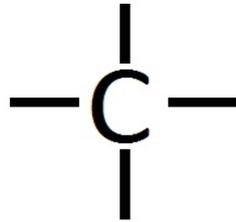


St Paul's Church, Rondebosch

Parish Newsletter

CARITAS

April 2017



The chemistry of living things is based on carbon, a tetravalent atom which, because of its four bonding sites, has the ability to bind with others to form chains, branches and ring systems, compounds of great beauty and intricacy without which we should not exist. Whether in a leaf, a snail, a person, a world or a solar system, the four bonds of the cross are essential for life – “crucial”. Organic chemistry is the extension into physical creation, which we **can** understand, of the Cross and Resurrection of Christ, which we **cannot** understand because their truth is in eternity.

This is not a static truth, for neither a diagram nor a wooden cross can show the passionate movement of all life, of electrons, cells, people, the sea, the skies, the stars, everything both seen and unseen. The Passion is not a cross-section of the past - it is moving, even through Time, like a river in flood.

The Cross is in the fabric of our whole being. Its arms reach out to encompass all opposites – desperation, ecstasy, pain, joy, illness, health, loves, hates, rich, poor, prisoners, freedom. The upright shaft goes deep in to the shadows of death, the common earth of our origins, and rises to the far distances of the heavens and space unimaginable. In every way, it goes far beyond the reach of reason.

ALLELUIA !

It is hard to imagine what it must have been like on the day after the crucifixion and terrifying suffering. How could anyone sleep after that? Or eat? Or “have a cup of tea”? The world had come to an end. Perhaps his friends, his dear loves, got a little sleep of exhaustion that night but they could not wait to get to the tomb as early as possible next morning - to find it empty. What desolation was that!

Each of us who has been through that dark night is again astounded by joy. Though we cannot understand, we know that Christ has risen and calls us by name. We shall meet to have coffee, and Christ will be sitting at the table with us. We shall be working at the computer, and suddenly there He is with us, using the technology! Or plodding up a hill, heavy with bags to carry, and we know that he is at the top cheering us on. Loneliest perhaps is in the night, when other are all peacefully asleep and we feel unknown, unwanted, perhaps in pain or weeping for times past and gone. There is Our Lord and He calls us by name, just as he spoke to Mary Magdalene, and we can recognise Him and welcome Him and rest in Him.

They believed you, that knowing you had made them more like you
and made them more themselves.

You had revealed for them, in them, the mystery of love:
the gift of life through death.

But why do I believe what your first friends said, and said of you?

It echoes in my own mind and heart,
answers the question and desire that I am.

And if I ask how the mystery itself – of love,
of life through death – they found in you
revealed itself to me? I can only say

“Through those I know and love, and in whom it seems
that Word and Spirit is still alive.”

Augustine Shutte (1938-2016) Dept of Philosophy, UCT
Studied Theology at Oxford, became a Dominican monk, left the order to marry and became a lecturer at UCT. He was active at Kolbe House for many years and later, as a result of his interest in African Theology, worshipped in a township church.

MARJORIE BULL

Now, there's someone reliable in the choir! God bless her. She is always there, singing alto, in the procession, looking after the music, apparently never ageing from year to year. She has always been musical and was for many years the organist at St Barnabas Church in Cape Town where she first joined the Royal School of Church Music. St Paul's had always depended upon boy choristers but, with changes to school policy, suddenly there were none. Marj was therefore approached by Richard Simons to help at St Paul's here in Rondebosch because there were no altos, and she has been singing in the choir at St Paul's ever since, for over 20 years, faithful at practices and services.

The Royal School of Church Music has presented her with an award in the Silver Category for her faithful service for the past 32 years! Congratulations, Marj, and God bless you.

All the congregation thank the choir for their hard work to make our services beautiful, especially during Passiontide and Easter.

(this ditty came from a member of the Congregational Church where they sing metrical psalms!)

THE ALTO'S LAMENT

It's tough to be an alto when you're singing in the choir.
The sopranos get the twiddly bits that people all admire.
The basses boom like big trombones, the tenors shout with glee,
But the alto part is on two notes, or if you're lucky, three!

And when we sing an anthem and lift our hearts in praises,
The men get all the juicy bits and telling little phrases.
Of course the trebles sing the tune - they always come off best –
While the altos only get three notes, and twenty-two bars rest!

It does not matter what we sing, from hymn book or from psalter,
The Choir Master looks at us – our voices start to falter.
"Too high, too low, too fast, too slow –you held that note too long!"
It doesn't matter what we do, it's certain to be wrong.

Oh shed a tear for altos, they're the Marthas and they know
In ranks of choral singers they're considered very low.
They are so very humble that a lot of folk forget them,
How they'd love to be sopranos, but their vocal chords won't let them.

And when the final trumpet sounds and we are wafted higher,
Sopranos, tenors, basses, will be in the Heavenly Choir.
While they sing 'Alleluia' to celestial flats and sharps,
The altos will sit in the corner, polishing their harps!

ANHOUSE is halfway up Stanley Road, No. 13 (which is lucky for some), a lovely old house with tall sash windows, high ceilings, impossible plumbing and wiring, and a complicated roof. It has room for 13 students to live there. There are two good-sized common rooms and a good kitchen fitted with stoves and enormous fridges! Two students to a fridge is luxury! Cleaning service, in the shape of Pinkie, comes reliably on week-days. WiFi was installed this year, the cost included in the rent. Best of all is that it is so central – just up the road to Upper Campus, across the road from Middle Campus, close to Baxter and the Main Road.

The main house includes an office for the Warden which is adjacent to the “Board-room” so can be used for meetings. The present Warden is Carol Hartley and she has been there for nearly 5 years, although it seems just like yesterday that she moved in to her little back room with its tiny kitchen and bathroom. Anhouse has been very lucky to have Carol in charge – she helps everyone in all kinds of emergencies, whether a lift to the airport or a visit to hospital, caring for them.

Most students shower often and have endless laundry. Luckily a Grey Watering system was installed some years ago and it is possible to keep the garden watered during drought. Carol’s passion is gardening, particularly of indigenous plants and roses and she has spent countless hours (and rands) to create a truly beautiful place. Try her granadillas! Smell her roses! But - the front door is directly in the path of the South-Easter which, blowing relentlessly in summer, slams the front door, dries out the garden and makes it impossible to sit on the front stoep and admire the stunning view! An enormous avocado tree, almost as high as the house and a partial windshield, also cuts out light from the rooms and bears its fruit too high to reach!

Thank you, Carol, for all you do!

THE BOOK OF JOY

This is the book of conversations between His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, as presented by Douglas Abrams. It is not a book to read all at one sitting, but rather a chapter at a time in order to meditate upon it. The gentle and deep friendship between these two men is inspiring. Both have seen tremendous political upheavals which wrenched their lives apart, particularly the Dalai Lama. This book is available to borrow from the church – a week at a time please, only, so that you give someone else a chance to read it. It is in the porch. If you take it, please tell me (Margaret 072 9981588) Thanks.

The Pastoral Care Team!

In years past there was The Soup Kitchen, or Sandwiches for the Poor, or Woolies for Winter, or bonnets for newborn babies! No, this is not a laugh. The point is that there are always people who need help of some kind and in this country we are certainly not short of them. I am not talking about vagrants – their problems can “stay in the wings” for the moment. These are ordinary people, perhaps retired or out of work, who go into some kind of assisted living and then find that their pensions simply do not meet expenses. There are many like this.

Charlie did not have money for the meter and therefore could not make himself a cup of tea! Lorraine needed nappy-pads but could not afford them, Michael could buy half a loaf of bread but no pilchards. Again, this is not a joke. People like this are not proud, but they are ashamed and shy to admit that they need a bit more. Packet soup, Instant noodles, toilet paper, tea and sugar, soap . . . these things all add up fast when surviving on a pension of R1650/mth and the rent has gone up!!

Each month parcels are made up for people who need help with household things. Lesley Munro, away on holiday at present, and Gay Morris who helps her, are well-organised. They know where to buy at best prices and their goods are carefully stacked in the Hall cupboards. If you know someone who needs help, especially someone who finds it difficult to admit this, please let Lesley or Gay know.

The parish thanks them for their work and they thank all of you who give so generously to help them, both in goods and money. It is a very important function of our faith – to help those among us who need it – and the donations which you give are really appreciated.

THIS DOES NOT LET YOU OFF THE CROCHET HOOK (OR KNITTING NEEDLE) for making squares or other garments for the poor!

As Messrs Sellars and Yeatman would say, “Knit on knotwithstanding”!

**Parish breakfast: April 29th is the last Saturday of month at
8.30 - 11 a.m.**

R30

Preceded by Holy Eucharist in the Lady Chapel at 8 a.m.

If you want to help serve, please get in touch with Enid 083 2877 876

If there ever was a time to pray for our leaders, it is now!

On the first day of Passion Week, the President reshuffled his cabinet and sacked his competent Finance Minister. Opinions in the ANC were sharply divided and several members of the Cabinet resigned. Ahmed Kathrada had just died: active against apartheid from his youth, he was arrested in Rivonia, and served 15 years in prison and Robben Island. The ANC cancelled his Memorial Service and so a Memorial celebration was held in St George's Cathedral on Thursday 6th April.

There has not been a crowd like that since the days of apartheid and the great prayers of protest led by "Arch" Tutu. The cathedral was packed, in aisles and side chapels, overflowing on to the outside steps and pavements - all ages, all races, all colours, all well-behaved, and outside were the ambulances and cops on standby.

Since 1948 and often at the Cathedral, the protests were with Singing, with Standing (perhaps with a black sash), with Torches (do you remember?) and with police around, tear-gas and purple water cannon. Displaced people even lived in the cathedral, for weeks, for months. On bad days the streets of central Cape Town were thick with tear-gas and we wept our way up St George's Street towards the quiet, and very brave, protesters at the Cathedral. This time people shouted "Amandla" repeatedly, fists in the air, right in front of the cross of the Christ who never claimed civilian rights or power. The frenzy of some speakers, shaking their fists, reminded me uneasily of the calls for "Barabbas", but on the other hand this was a gathering of total exasperation. After all these years, all these efforts, what a mess this country is in! Surely we can do better than this. "Zuma must go", that was the main message. The Memorial for Ahmed Kathrada took second place. You will probably have seen all this on the TV and rightly applauded the key speakers, Jeremy Cronin and Pravin Gordhan. The brave founders and the people of high principles who are still members of the African National Congress have been betrayed by coGruption. To preserve their integrity, they may have to resign and re-form.

The wonderful, and peaceful, holding hands by thousands of people of all kinds on Friday 7th April in the streets of our cities shows that the people of this country have a wonderful spirit of peace and love. There are inspiring stories of good people who do great works. Hold firm, everyone, for we are not racists and we must not allow bigots to project their own racist disability on to the rest of us. Hope, and treasure the good things we have among us.

Here is a good story of South Africa, and there are many like it:

A young couple had no work, and were given a batch of empty medicine capsules. They put ball-bearings in each capsule, painted two eyes on each – Lo and behold! Jumping beans - which they sold at the markets for 60c. each. So now what? They got some foam, and cut pieces in animal shapes, and stuffed each capsule with a shape – in hot water the capsule melted and a magical animal was released. Bath beans! So now what? They found people, disabled in some way, who could not get proper jobs, and showed them how to stuff capsules with animal shapes. Then they got proper cutting machines, and then they found a factory building far away on the Kommetjie road, and then they found many people looking for work. The idea caught on so that people not only in South Africa but in Germany and Australia, in Britain and even the United States wanted bath beans. So then they made another thing which fizzed in the water and released a toy, and their markets got bigger until they had to fill a whole shipping container every month, and they had to employ managers and more people.

Thirty years later, this young couple are older and their children have grown up. Their daughter is a trained teacher. A posh school next to the factory lost all their pupils because Masiphumelele had riots and the people there burned tyres on the road, so the buildings were empty - and the Bean People, which is how they are known, helped their daughter to rent the empty school so that the children of their factory workers, and their friends, all from Masiphumelele, could go to pre-primary school and then on to Primary School in the buildings right there next to the factory and with the open playground and all its lovely equipment and a big open green field.

That school is now registered with the Department and has an NGO status so that donors to its work can claim tax exemption for their donations! For this first year of existence, the school has enrolled 50 children.

It is called Bongolethu, Our Hope.

When you buy a packet of bath-beans for your child or grandchild, remember the magic of this story, and when you hear, yet again, of “rioting” in Masi or Delft or wherever, **pray for all the people who do not want to riot but only to live and work in peace. They are the true sufferers and they are Our Hope for the future.**

SUNDAY EVENINGS AT 5 P.M.

It is not possible to have a Eucharist every Sunday evening, probably about twice a month, but there will be a service every Sunday. This is not just for students – it is for everyone and anyone. The kind of worship will perhaps be less formal than at the morning services and it is hoped to include African languages, not just English. The hymns sung may be of a more community kind because there will not be any organ or choir. Sometimes there will be opportunity for your participation, even discussion. In fact, the atmosphere should be more relaxed than in the morning services but it is still worship.

Obviously it is hoped that students will come, and that there will be students from “outside” South Africa who can join us.

- **THANK YOU to those who made soup for the Lent Wednesday evenings and a big thank-you to Carol and Erica who arranged the programme on Shadowlands. It was a commitment well-fulfilled.**
- **Thank you to all who help pay for the car-guards. We have to keep them for the time being.**

Praying for people

Some of us have huge families and to light a candle for each child, grandchild, great grandchild, and friend, and in-law would take a whole pack of candles every Sunday. Our dear Lord understands if you light just one candle, or perhaps just two, for all of them at once!! This will not reduce your prayers but it will help the church “candle account”!

**Father Jim and all the staff of St Paul’s
wish you a blessed Easter
and JOY**

Interim Rector: Revd Jim Harris, who will be happy to visit you

Assistant Priest: Revd Darron Misplon, who is also a full-time schoolteacher!

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Contributions received with thanks at the A/C St Paul’s, Standard Bank, Rondebosch, 71488928