

Some readings from the Hebrew /Christian scriptures for reflection when in need of comfort and support.

Proverbs 3.11–26	The Lord will be your confidence
Isaiah 55.6–11	Seek the Lord while he may be found
Lamentations 3.22–26	Wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord
Habakkuk 2.20–3.4	The glory of the God
Psalms 23	The Lord is my shepherd
Psalms 33.13–21	The eye of the Lord is on those that fear him
Psalms 46	Be still and know that I am God
Psalms 103.1–14	The Lord heals all your infirmities
Psalms 130	Out of the depths have I called to you
Psalms 131	I have calmed and quieted my soul
Psalms 145	I will exalt you, O God my king
Romans 5.6–11	While we were yet sinners Christ died for us
Romans 8.31–39	If God is for us, who is against us?
1 Corinthians 13	Love, the greatest gift
Philippians 4.4–7	Rejoice in the Lord always
James 5.14–16	Ministry with the sick
1 John 3.18–24	We know that God abides in us
Matthew 5.1–12	The Beatitudes
Mark 10.46–52	Your faith has made you well
Luke 10.46–52	Martha and Mary
John 6.47–58	The bread of life
John 14.1–3	I go to prepare a place for you

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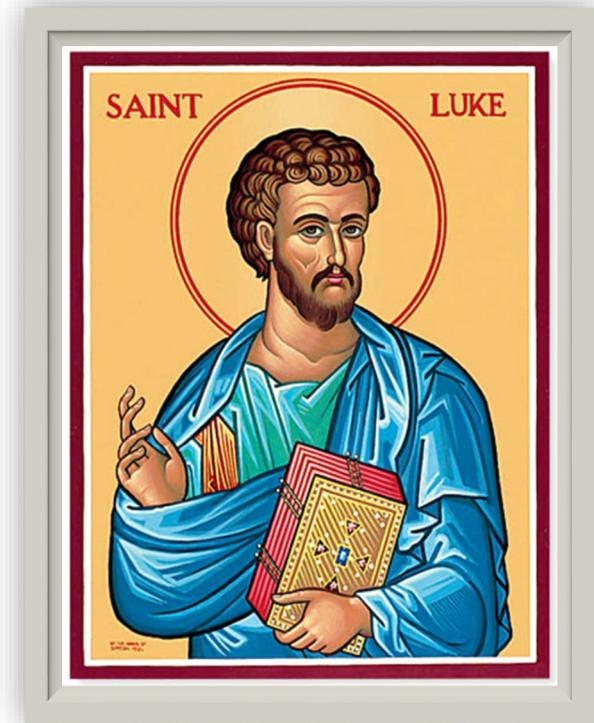
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St George's Anglican Church Malvern

**The ministry of the parish to
Anglican patients at Cabrini Hospital.**



Luke the physician is the patron saint of medical professionals and associated with the Church's ministry to the sick.

When the sun was setting, all those who had any that were sick with various diseases brought them to Jesus; and he laid his hands on every one of them and healed them.
Gospel of Luke 4.40

Why Cabrini Hospital?

Cabrini Hospital, developed from an earlier small facility by the Cabrini Sisters of Italy who came to Melbourne in 1948 and now a major teaching hospital of Melbourne and Monash Universities, is in the parish of St Georges and thus part of the community for which we have a responsibility.

Cabrini's main facility is on Wattletree Road, Malvern.
<www.cabrini.com.au>

Who visits?

Prior to 1990 the Vicar and the Curate would visit Anglican patients on a referral basis. In 1990 Vilma Jackson joined them and began visiting, which enabled all Anglican patients to receive a visit from the parish. That was the beginning of St Georges Cabrini Chaplaincy team. In 1992 John Scott came to the parish as assistant priest and he and Thea doubled the size of the team. At this stage lay persons had no formal training for pastoral care: Vilma was a nurse by training, Thea a social worker. In 1994 Barry Smith became the new vicar and began the practice of training of lay chaplains to assist the Saint George's Cabrini Chaplaincy team.

Elsbeth Jones, a nurse by profession, was the first person to undergo training in Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE), which is a required subject for clergy. CPE is a recognised tertiary level subject which seeks to develop a person's pastoral, professional and personal identity and skills through an experiential educational process. It is overseen by the Association for Supervised Pastoral Education in Australia, having been brought to Australia from the United States in the 1970's.

Subsequently six more people, Raelene Lane, Joan Snedden, Bryan Elmes, Coral Gordon, Lyn Rafferty, and Merrin James have successfully completed CPE.

ANOINTING AND LAYING ON OF HANDS

Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. *James 5.14-16*

The minister says

Almighty God, in your word we are encouraged to pray for the sick and anoint them with oil.

Grant that N who is anointed with this oil may be strengthened by your Holy Spirit, healed and restored, according to your good purposes; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen.**

The minister anoints the sick person, saying

N, I anoint you in the name of the Lord Jesus. **Amen.**

Some prayers for you to use:

For healing

God of grace and comfort
enfold N with your mercy.
Strengthen *him/her* with the shield of faith,
and enable *him* to accept what is to come;
heal *him* and bear *his* pain,
keep *him* in peace, and fix *his* heart on you;
through Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen.**

Almighty God, giver of life and health,
hear our prayers for N,
that by your blessing on *him/her* and those who minister to *him*,
he may be restored to health of body and mind according to your will,
and in the presence of your people give thanks to you;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

she has lived by, and one shaped by her own distinct choices. She has taken the first step back to her faith. In addition, this will allow her family to further understand and appreciate her wishes for a church funeral.

The Revd Mark Pearce, Vicar of St James' Glen Iris

who is the Anglican Chaplain to Cabrini Prahran, which offers palliative care to the seriously ill and dying.

I spend Wednesday mornings at Cabrini Prahran, and now run a fortnightly Holy Communion service in their Chapel. I am regularly there during the week praying with families and patients and anointing them as requested. I see it as real privilege to be involved with families at this time.



When you ill or someone close to you is, and you would like someone visit, pray with you and listen to your experiences as you reflect upon them seeking God in what is happening, the clergy of St George's are a phone call or an email away. If you let us know, we can bring you Christ's ministry and support you at what can be a difficult and even fearful time.

With permission we will pray publicly for you and others each morning and in each Eucharist. All hospitals have chaplains available who will visit and care for your spiritual needs. Never hesitate to ask.

When facing seriously or long term illness, or before surgery you may ask for the Sacrament of Anointing with oil. This is one of God's gifts to us through the Church and was the practice of Christians from the earliest times, as we read in the letter of James.

Judy Wright is currently undertaking her training at The Alfred Hospital.

The various curates have taken their place in the team and the parish is indebted to Walter McEntee who since retiring from school chaplaincy has made himself available each Tuesday to visit. Lyn Rafferty and Coral Gordon, who have also been active members of the team now provide back up when others are not available.

The Vicar is on call 24/7 and also available to patients at Cabrini Prahran, where she once baptised a baby in the presence of a dying grandparent, although this facility is now visited weekly by our neighbouring parish, St James' Glen Iris.

Who is visited by St George's?

Each Tuesday morning the team receives lists of all patients, generally 60-80, whose religion is recorded on their admission form as C of E or Anglican. They divide these between the team members who generally visit the same wards each week. By agreement with the Hospital, Anglicans are the only patients the team visits. Cabrini Hospital has a team of full time pastoral care workers who are available to all patients, irrespective of religious affiliation. Any patient may also request a visit from their faith community leaders and it is not unusual to see other clergy, rabbis and a Buddhist chaplain in the hospital.

Sometimes other clergy refer a patient from their parish and sometimes the Cabrini pastoral department refers someone to the St George's team. Team members visit each patient on their list and there is time for a chat, deeper discussion, prayer, blessing, Holy Communion, anointing, whatever the patient might want. Sometimes this can include family members as well.

In addition the team provides a short prayer service at midday each Tuesday in the Chapel except on the 3rd Tuesday of a month at 11am,

when a celebration of the Holy Eucharist takes place. Services from the Chapel may be viewed on the Hospital Chapel TV channel.

Bryan Elmes says:

The majority of patients say, "I'm not religious but I do believe" and these are invariably 'C of E'. While they are happy to chat for a while that is the end of it. Others, such as WWII survivors like to talk at length and often I hear that it is an event at that time which has driven a wedge between them and religion/God. Others, particularly in the Intensive Care Unit, like to receive a prayer or blessing and then there are those who are eager to take Holy Communion and some who wish to be anointed with oil in the sacrament for the seriously ill.

Since 1990 the following parishioners have been members of the Pastoral Team from St George's:

Vilma Jackson, Thea Scott, Elsbeth Jones, Raelene Lane, Joan Snedden, Bryan Elmes, Coral Gordon, Lyn Rafferty, Merrin James, Judy Wright, assisted by curates of the day, and other clergy.

Here are some stories from the pastoral visits made by team members.

The Revd Dr Joan Snedden.

The patient greeted me enthusiastically. She was an elderly lady, rather thin and depleted. She said something like, 'I am so pleased you have come'. I had never seen her before and thought she was mistaking me for someone else. But I didn't interrupt because she was eager to continue. She said she had persuaded the nurse to open her window because she disliked being enclosed in the air-conditioning. As the warm afternoon air flowed into her room she fell asleep and had a dream ... a dream that a little bird landed

both conversations might have gone, opportunity thwarted by fear. **Ms Merrin James. Merrin**, a St George's parishioner now works for Cabrini Pastoral Team.

I met with Margaret earlier in 2015 when the ward staff rang to request pastoral support for her. Margaret is in her later 80s. She had nominated her religion as Anglican. She had come in to the hospital for tests and possible surgery. Margaret was due to be discharged to rehab the following day. She had just received a phone call that a significant family friend Helen had died.

Margaret appeared quite philosophical about her friend Helen's death. Helen had had cancer for some time and had undergone chemo/radiotherapy. Whilst these treatments had been beneficial, Margaret believed that her friend Helen had suffered unnecessarily. I offered a listening pastoral presence as Margaret reflected on their wonderful years of friendship.

I next met Margaret when she returned to the hospital for further treatment. She had been doing a lot of thinking since Helen's death and now wanted to put her affairs in order. This included an Advance Care Plan which the hospital could assist her with. This would enable her to ensure that her wishes and choices were respected. On reconnecting with Margaret, she opened up about her thoughts around her end of life. Helen's death had been weighing heavily on her and she wanted to put everything in place for the sake of her (only) daughter).

Margaret said hadn't been connected with an Anglican parish for years. However she had been to family weddings in churches, and also mentioned the confirmation of a grandchild. I explained to Margaret that I could arrange for one of the priests from our Anglican Chaplaincy team to contact her regarding her wishes for her funeral. Margaret was appreciative of the pastoral support provided. "This is exactly what I what" she replied.

Margaret will be able to have a funeral that reflects the values 9

try to cheer you up. I'm here to sit with you in whatever space you are in at the minute, with whatever emotions you are feeling. And if you want to talk about them – I'm here". I often see them visibly relax at that point. For some it is exhausting trying to keep up a cheerful façade when everything within them feels anything but. And it is a privilege to be trusted with their intimate stories, often borne out of pain, or fear or disappointment or relief. Walking up to each bed is walking into the unknown, but not entirely, because I know God is already there.

And this story: The woman had told me quite firmly at the beginning she was not religious, never went to church, then settled back, pleased she had got that out of the way and breathed a sigh of relief. So I let her set the tone of the conversation and she began chatting about her grandchildren, a safe, satisfactory topic. Then the conversation quite unassumingly began to veer off from the safe course, as it so often does, barely perceptible, but a turning no doubt about it. "My granddaughter was in hospital once when she was about 10, she nearly died twice but they got her back". "I imagine that was a frightening time". "Yes, it was, but she got better and is fine. We are not a religious family you know, never sent the children or grandchildren to Sunday school, never talk about religion". "Uh-huh". "One day soon after, my daughter and I took my grandchildren to town and after it as St Patrick's Cathedral was so near, we decided to talk the girls in there, they had never been in a church before. And as we were walking up the aisle one granddaughter asked who the man was in the stained glass window and we told her it was Jesus. Anyway the other one, who had nearly died said, "Oh I know that's Jesus, I recognise him, I met him while I was in hospital". She finishes speaking and the room becomes very still. "I imagine that was surprising for you all, what do you think that was all about?"

She plucks at the bedsheet. "Oh, I don't know, we didn't ask". And looking slightly embarrassed she begins to talk about something else. The conversation is shut down, just as the conversation with the granddaughter was shut down. As I leave I wonder where

on her windowsill. It hopped up and down along the sill, and then hopped in and out several times. She said that it was a most beautiful thing to see it hop out for the last time and effortlessly fly up and away. That was her dream. No discussion was necessary – we just sat and looked at the open window and the open sky. She had needed to share that dream, and I was pleased to be the person who came along at the right time. There are many occasions in this work when visitors are sent at the right time. Being religious, we put God into the equation!

Dr Bryan Elmes.

Joan knew her illness was terminal, and she knew she had only a few months to live.

We talked about death and dying, casting around in this area with various questions and answers. I do not recall the particular question she asked about the body, but I remember the ah-ha moment when the answer came to me. I have learned that in these moments you don't ask where the answer came from, you just run with it.

'I imagine the body is a bit like a taxi. It picks you up at birth and carries you through this life until you exit it at death and go on to your next appointment'

This image appealed to Joan and I left it with her.

When I visited the next week there was a framed picture of a taxicab with wings in a blue sky and the numberplate read JOAN. Joan's sister worked for graphic designers and they had drawn a picture from her story. Joan's funeral was from St Georges conducted by Joan Snedden who later composed a short poem describing the picture.

*Yellow Taxi flying by
Pink wings beating in blue sky
Passenger filled with expectation
Of the Heavenly destination.*

Mrs Raelene Lane

To be a member of the Anglican Chaplaincy team at Cabrini for many years was a privilege. Taking part in Midday Prayers and attending the monthly celebration of the Anglican Eucharist in the Chapel Was part of this ministry and important for me.

However, listening to patients and their families talk at a time of crisis and change in their lives, and offering prayer and sacraments were the most constant part of a Chaplain's work.

My most consistent prayer was "Quieten my mind that I might make room for your healing presence" and it is one that I still use and practice.

There were times of joy when a baby was born and welcomed into a family or when people were healed, and of sorrow when someone died or when their illness became worse.

Sometimes the experiences were profound and I felt humbled. On one occasion I was with a patient who was suffering great pain and they told me "I can bear this, you know, because I know that Jesus suffered for me."

Another time I felt awed. I was with a patient who was very distressed and restless. They were facing death and tearfully confessed, "They were scared of dying because they had done many bad things in their life." I found myself saying, "But God is a forgiving God." They queried "Even me?" "Yes, even you" I replied feeling absolutely sure of this. The patient became still, so much so that I felt sure they had experienced already His presence and forgiveness.

Ms Elsbeth Jones.

I was invited to participate in the ministry at Cabrini Hospital by former Vicar Barry Smith. His talking and teachings were wholehearted and deep, and gave nervous me some insight into what I may meet. His initial suggestion was for me to go as Christ's messenger and meet the person not the disease.

This was important because it was the reverse of my nursing experience. Fr Barry walked with me that first day, into Intensive Care to meet a parishioner. I was nervous; he had confidence in my pastoral ability. We then went to the cafeteria to have lunch.

It was during that time that an unknown woman came to me to ask if I would go and see her husband who was in ICU. It took me by surprise, yet I think not so for Barry Smith. We went to see that fearful family. My reflections later on were of what it was to actually hold on to the point of being Christ's 'face' and how that could touch people in ways that I at that time was unaware.

In Coronary Care, I visited Anglican people on my Cabrini list. These were people who were facing the possibility of dying and I would read prayers or passages from the Bible that were comforting for them. One was a single middle aged man with no family supports. In asking God for guidance, the message I received was to brighten up his sterile hospital room. So I'd go to the hospital garden armed with scissors and return with flowers, then ask the staff for vases to hold them.

That man eventually died, but in a room that was filled with prayer and the beauty of the glory of God's garden. My reflections were of how little was needed to let the Triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit minister to people, and my own faith was strengthened.

The Revd Jacqui Smith.

"I'm not religious", "If you are here to tell me to go to Church I'm not interested", "I don't know why I am telling you this", "Thanks for listening". There are just a few of the comments I encounter as I go about my pastoral visiting at Cabrini every Tuesday. I see the panic in some people's eyes when they see the "God Squad" approaching - I know for many people, I may be the only overt contact they have had with 'religion' for some time. One man bluntly told me that if I was there to convert him, I was wasting my time. I responded, "Don't worry, I'm not here to make you another notch in my bible" - we both laughed, had a great talk and the week after he greeted me like an old friend.

In hospital people are usually in a vulnerable space. They lack choice, they lack autonomy, they are often frightened or worried or having to face issues they would rather not think about. I tell some people, "I'm not here to talk religion with you, I'm not even here to