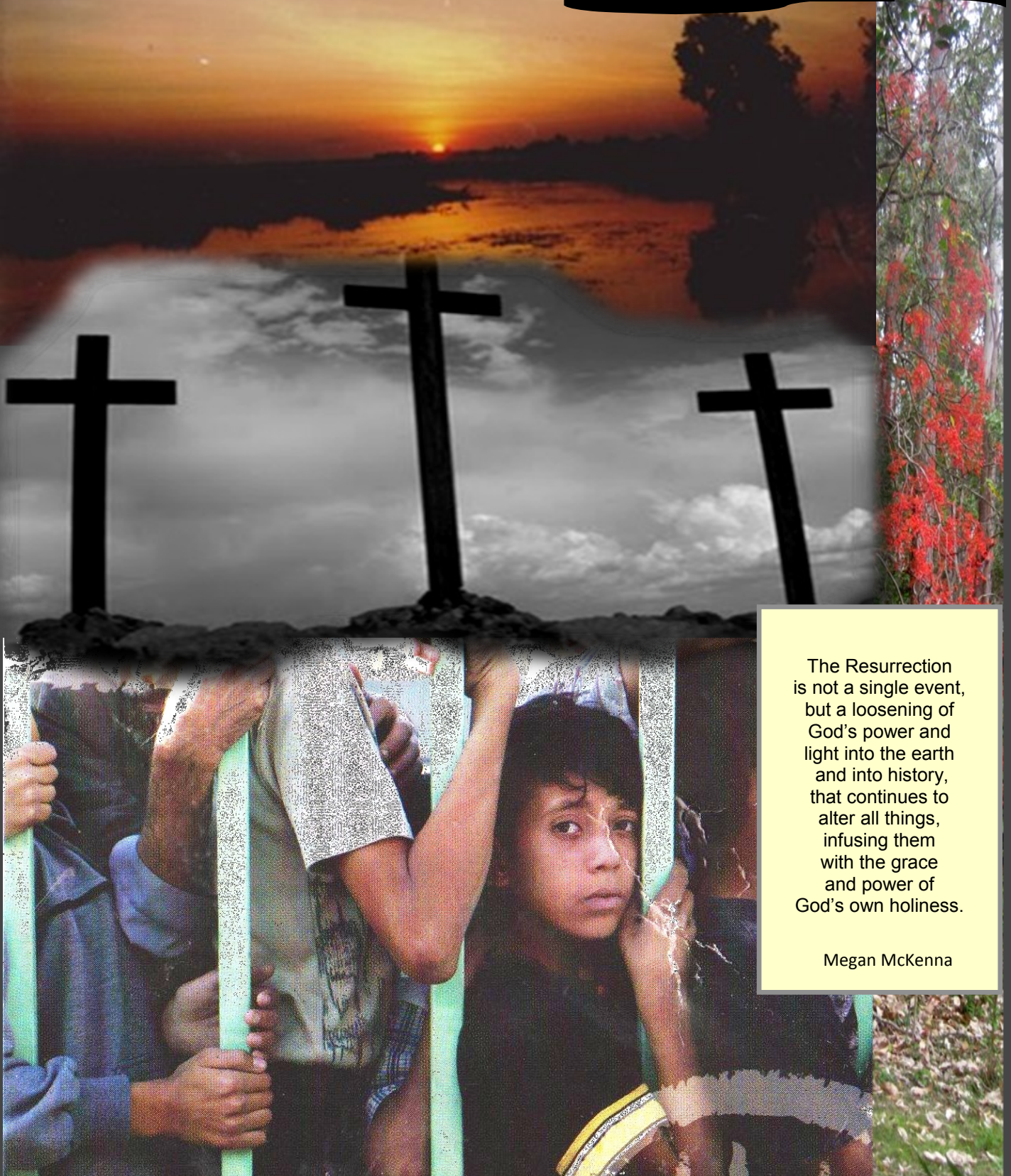


Augustine & Monica

Be Merciful



The Resurrection is not a single event, but a loosening of God's power and light into the earth and into history, that continues to alter all things, infusing them with the grace and power of God's own holiness.

Megan McKenna

Feedback

Fr John comments



A sense of emptiness – a sense of incompleteness – a sense of dissatisfaction – a sense of failure – a sense of uselessness – a thirst for something better – a desire to achieve.

What do all these phrases have in common?

They are all aspects of the mystery of the Death and Resurrection of Jesus.

When Simon Peter, John and Mary Magdalen went to the tomb of Jesus on Sunday morning, they discovered that the tomb was empty and that the linen clothes used to wrap his body were still there. Mary concluded that someone had stolen his body and hidden it elsewhere. John however, the one the Gospel refers to as 'the other disciple', *'saw the empty tomb and believed. Till this moment they had failed to understand the teaching of Scripture, that he must rise from the dead.'*

Each disciple later met the risen Christ personally on a number of different occasions. It was not the meeting that led John to belief in the resurrection of Jesus, it was the absence of his body from the tomb. Emptiness led to fullness of belief.

Belief in Jesus as the Christ, the promised one comes

from the experience of absence, of emptiness. Ask those who have come to faith in Christ as adults. It was a sense of lacking something in their life, a sense of emptiness, or lack of purpose, that encouraged them to take Jesus, and his claims, seriously. If someone is totally satisfied with their life at the present moment, they have no need of anything else.

Even the vice of greed has a positive aspect to it. It is a feeling of not having enough that drives people to achieve more. Sadly they strive to acquire the wrong things. We should be greedy about God, since we can never have enough of God. We should be thirsty in our desire to satisfy our yearning for God. St Augustine expresses this yearning: *'Our hearts are restless O God until they rest in you.'*

The Paschal Mystery is at the centre of Christianity. The Suffering, Death and Resurrection of Jesus is the message that we preach as Christians. We spend our lives attempting to apply this message to our own lives. How does the renewal of life promised by Christ's resurrection apply to me in this situation? How do we apply this mystery to our own lives? When things go wrong, when we do not succeed in a project we undertake, it is more usual to become angry or depressed. How many of us are able to say *'this misfortune is proof that I am about to enter the new life of Christ's Resurrection'*? *There is no easy path to success or glory or life.* May God bless you in this Easter Season.

Fr John Scarrott



Excerpts from Pope Francis' Inspiring Vision by Fr Noel Connolly SSC

Recently I read an article by Paulo Suess, a German priest/missiologist who lives in Brazil. He claimed that Pope Francis was asking his fellow Bishops, "How can you fearlessly navigate the streets of the contemporary world if your driver's licence is expired, your vision limited and your street maps out of date?" That is exactly how many of us feel living in a secular and plural world where religion is greeted by many with apathy rather than anger. I often feel lost and wonder if my street map is out of date, as I struggle to articulate a Gospel that is meaningful and relevant to modern Australia. What can we do?

For Francis the answer is mercy. "The Church, guided by the Gospel of mercy and by love of mankind, hears the cry for justice and intends to respond to it with all her might" (188). We just have to respond honestly with tenderness and mercy. We do not always need words....

Maybe we are asking too much of ourselves, trying for an answer when silence, respect and compassion are all that is needed. I am reminded of a report from the Synod of New Evangelisation that Archbishop Tagle of Manila said, "for the Church to be a place where people meet God, it needs to learn three things from the example of Jesus: humility, respect for others, and silence...The Church must discover the power of silence...Confronted with the sorrows, doubts and uncertainties of people, she cannot pretend to give easy solutions. In Jesus, silence becomes the way of attentive listening, compassion and prayer. It is the way of truth."

When people's suffering is great our only pastoral response is often silence. It is not a personally satisfying response but it may be the most helpful and the best way to reveal the beauty of God. It does not take away all our questions or our feelings of powerlessness. But perhaps we have to learn to trust that silence is more attractive and powerful, because it is more true and convincing than easy answers given too quickly. In compassion and silence we are allowing God the freedom to save in God's own way.

(with kind permission St Columbans Mission Society, "Pope Francis' Inspiring Vision")



Some Food for Thought and Action

Last Lenten Season in early 2015 (about 10 months before the Year of Mercy was begun), Meg rang the Chair of the Parish Pastoral Council at the time (me) because she was staying in a small holiday unit at Rainbow Bay and wanted a lift to Mass at St. Augustine's. Her son had brought her from Melbourne on a working holiday. He, promoting his product, was tied up with appointments far and wide at all hours of the day and night. First Friday Mass was coming up at St. Augustine's Church and (being Lent anyway), I saw no indulgences lost by saying I would pick her up and drive her to Mass. Taking her home, we stopped for a coffee. Meg, a sprightly lady in her 80's, is enthused in producing a booklet, **Timely Prayers for the Year of Mercy** —(the title informally suggested by her Bishop).

Why so? In Meg's words, *the media seems almost bent on publicising evil from every direction. What about the prayer domain?* **Timely Prayers** is drawn from Beatitudes as an **antithesis** ('anti-the-isis'?) to these evils. Meg saw a powerful combination between the Beatitudes, (our Blessed Lord's words) and the 'blue print' of the Rosary (of His Mother), strengthened with our invocation to Holy Michael Archangel to be our safeguard against the wickedness and snares of the devil. From these Beatitudes, **Timely Prayers** has drawn up Five Reflective Perspectives for Prayer. The Beatitudes?

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven". As a Parish, do we 'live' this and other spiritual challenges of the Beatitudes? Meg attended Christian Meditation sessions within the Parish, every Mass and Ministry event. She asked me to edit this booklet. It set me thinking. Meg had spent time, money, and had persevered. 'Ecclesiastical Permission to Publish' was obtained. Maybe, God sent her here to encourage prayer modelled on these Beatitudes; that we may become *poor in spirit, meek, mourn and be comforted, hunger and thirst for righteousness, be merciful, have a clean heart, be peace-makers, suffer for righteousness, stand against evil and be glad and rejoice?*

Delayed by disasters, this booklet is now available in electronic format. It is free, not for sale. It will be published, (2,000 booklets: about \$2000), dependent on donations to cover printing, postage, etc. More info: **Meg Fennell, PO Box 311, Bentleigh Vic 3204, where donations are also welcome. Email: <timelyprayers@gmail.com.au.** There is much more to this story, but space will not allow. Just know that God visits each one of us through the many people who pass before our eyes. And it is for each of us to recognise God and respond, as we aim to practise being 'poor in spirit'!

-Peter Cossins (former Chair of Parish Pastoral Council)

George Lunin's comment:

Re your article on Leadership in the last issue:

I am one of the bad guys who gets impatient with the indecisive driver. I think he should be more cognisant of

the fact that back up of 10 or so cars is not justified simply for his convenience. It is also dangerous, as there is the temptation to undertake a dangerous manoeuvre in overtaking him.

However, I understand your intent.



Humility, Honesty, Respect -Be Patient

By an Anonymous Parishioner

Our Parishioner awoke around 0230 hours one morning and wrote this poem. He told me that "they are the words of God, given to me by the spirit of Jesus." (Mary-Jean Brill)

Humble and honest,
you try hard to be,
Respect for people is the key.
To unlock the door
to God's great gift,
For if you knock, God will be swift.
To bring you in to his great light,
And show the way day and night.

For your fellowman you must love,
As does your God above.
Seek his hand with all your might,
Battle hard; it's worth the fight.
For God will come
and cleanse your mind
And teach your heart to be kind.

For where one's mind
and God's spirit meet,
You will find the heart;
it won't be weak.
A strong heart guides someone,
In all they do in God's great land.

What a lovely way to walk this life,
To keep you straight,
away from strife.
And help God's people every day.
For the purpose of life, we must do,
To find out how, you must ask who?
Who will help you, to discover how?

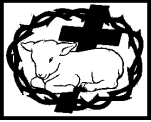
Look to the heavens,
and take a bow.

For God will come on Angels' wings,
Listen hard; you will hear them sing.
They sing and praise God above,
As we should, and show our love.

I hear you say,
"It's too hard to pray",
And you think that God delays.
Well yes God does.
You need correction,
Before God gives you new direction.

When he sweeps your house clean,
You will feel where he's been.
A loving heart God will create,
Please be patient; it's worth the wait!

Easter



Thoughts about Easter

by Pat Mullins



We celebrate the feast of Easter, which could be seen in society today as more about an overindulgence of chocolate than a celebration of death as an entry into new life, affirming our faith in resurrection. The prophet Kahlil Gibran tells us that we need to seek death in the heart of life. In the movie *The Last Cab to Darwin*, the cab driver finds his quest to control his death has taught him how to live. Our "Yes", to embrace our living, to be the best that we can be, is proof that death is not an end, but a beginning of what our life is all about.

We dwell in these days on the horror of the execution of Jesus by crucifixion. This story so typifies the human condition in every age. Those in power were threatened by the goodness, simplicity and honesty of Jesus that they set about his elimination. But Jesus did not/has not gone away. The cross is worn today to remember that jealousy, hatred and evil among and within us will never triumph, because it can always be defeated by goodness.

Christ on the cross bows his head, waiting for you, that he may kiss you; his arms outstretched, that he may embrace you, his hands are open, that he may enrich you; his body spread out, that he may give himself totally; his feet are nailed, that he may stay there; his side open for you, that he may let you enter there. (St Bonaventure)

Our human suffering, so difficult at times to understand, is like the seed which only when it breaks open in the darkness can produce a flower of beauty beyond imagination. Suffering prepares us to love. Joyce Rupp in *Open the Door* writes:

Selfless love is real. In spite of the horrors of war and other brutal ways that humans treat one another, love is possible. Unselfish people reside everywhere. They love unconditionally, dedicate themselves to alleviating suffering, are willing to give their all for another, intent on being life-givers and spirit-transformers. These are not do-gooders, holier-than-thou people. No, this kind of love is seared by trials, purified by personal growth, shaped by persistent rededication and self-giving that goes beyond required duty. Each day people on the planet open the door of their hearts and love pours forth. No matter how discouraged we might get about the world's violence and hatred, let us remember that generous love thrives in kind souls and expresses itself daily.



Such is resurrection!



I pray You will have the blessing
Of being consoled and sure
about your death.

May you know in your soul
There is no need to be afraid.

When your time comes, may you have
Every blessing and strength you need.

May there be a beautiful
welcome for you
In the home you are going to.
You are not going somewhere strange,
Merely back to the home you
have never left.

May you live with compassion
And transfigure everything
Negative within and about you.

When you come to die,
May it be after a long life.

May you be tranquil
Among those who care for you.

May your going be sheltered
And your welcome assured.

May your soul smile
In the embrace
Of your Anam Cara



Treat yourself to a
day of Spirituality
for Women at
St Monica's on
THURSDAY
5th May.
Details in the
Parish Newsletter



Mercy listens—really listens, with interest and concern, then smiles and reaches out her hand. J M De Matteis (1993)

Our Lady Help Of Christians

by Mary-Jean Brill



There is a lot of background history to the fact that Our Lady became known as Our Lady Help of Christians. Did you also know that as 'Our Lady Help of Christians' she is also the Patroness of Australia?

Back in the 3rd Century the Fathers of the Church referred to the Virgin Mary as Mother of God and the Helper. St. John Chrysostom used the term in a sermon in 345. The Invocation of Mary as Help of Christians, according to Fr Johann G. Roten, SM is part of the oldest prayer addressed to Mary, the *Sub tuum praesidium* which was found on a papyrus sheet dating probably from around the end of the 3rd Century. Praesidium can be translated as "an assistance given in time of war by fresh troops in a strong manner".

Later in the 1400s King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain not only sent Christopher Columbus off to seek the New World but they were also heavily involved at home trying to save their homeland and surroundings from the marauding Moors. During the 1500s Christian Europe spent much time, money and human life trying to prevent the Islamisation of their countries.

During 1571 Pope Pius V was desperately calling on Christian armies from all over Europe to defend the continent and asked believers to pray to Mary for help. Soleiman the Magnificent, an Ottoman Turk Ruler who reigned for five decades, was building up his fleets in the Mediterranean and had overcome many of the islands in that sea. Pius V put Don John of Austria as his Captain General in charge of the huge fleet of the Holy League.

On 6th October 1571 priests on all the ships moved amongst the crews and the oarsmen praying the Rosary. It is said the ships moved in a cross-like formation whilst the Ottomans had a crescent shaped formation. On 7th October, Our Lady's feast day dawned and The Battle of Lepanto was excessively fierce. Our Lady intervened, the wind changed with the Turks losing over 30,000 men by the end of the battle. The Battle of Lepanto is the one of the world's greatest naval battles. More about this great battle can be found on the internet "*The Battle that saved the Christian West*" by Christopher Beck. Pius V saw the victory in a vision that same day, gave Mary the title "Help of Christians" and added the invocation to her litany.

In 1808 Pope Pius VII was arrested on the orders of Napoleon and was imprisoned in Grenoble in France and then at Fontainebleau. Pius vowed that if he returned to Rome he would initiate a special feast in honour of Mary. In 1814 after the Battle of Leipzig, he was released from captivity, made his way back to Rome where he was enthusiastically welcomed on 24th May and instituted the feast of Our Lady Help of Christians.

Now Mary does not only help those people engaged in war but also helps others and is a bringer of good news too. Don Bosco dedicated his Salesian congregation to Our Lady Help of Christians.

The early days of Catholicism in Australia were 'priestless' and people kept the faith alive by reciting the Rosary. Australia was the first nation to choose Mary, Help of Christians as their patroness in 1844, at the first assembly of bishops, even though not officially approved by Rome until 1852.

Let us take the example of previous worshippers and continue to have devotion to Mary, Help of Christians. We need her help today more than ever.

"Our Lady Help of Christians, pray for us".

Barefoot College

by Utmutato a Leleknek (Mother Mother Earth News)

In a mother's womb there were two babies. One asked the other: "Do you believe in life after delivery?"

The other replied, "Why, of course. There has to be something after delivery. Maybe we are here to prepare ourselves for what we will be later."

"Nonsense," said the first. "There is no life after delivery. What kind of life would that be?"

The second said, "I don't know, but there will be more light than here. Maybe we will walk with our legs and eat from our mouths. Maybe we will have other senses that we can't understand now."

The first replied, "That is absurd.

Walking is impossible. And eating with our mouths? Ridiculous! The umbilical cord supplies nutrition and everything we need. But the umbilical cord is so short. Life after delivery is to be logically excluded."

The second insisted, "Well I think there is something and maybe it's different from what it is here. Maybe we won't need this physical cord anymore."

The first replied, "Nonsense. And moreover if there is life, then why has no one ever come back from there? Delivery is the end of life, and in the after-delivery there is nothing but darkness and silence and oblivion. It takes us nowhere."

"Well, I don't know," said the second, "but certainly we will meet Mother and she will take care of us."

The first replied, "Mother? You actually believe in Mother? That's laughable. If Mother exists then where is She now?"

The second said, "She is all around us. We are surrounded by Her. We are of Her. It is in Her that we live. Without Her this world would not and could not exist." Said the first: "Well, I don't see Her, so it is only logical that She doesn't exist."

To which the second replied, "Sometimes, when you're in silence and you focus and you really listen, you can perceive Her presence, and you can hear Her loving voice, calling down from above".

Year of Mercy



Year of Mercy Pilgrim Days

Not able to go to Spain for a pilgrimage?

All members of the Archdiocese, as an individual or as a group, are invited to spend a free day as a pilgrim at the beautiful Santa Teresa Spirituality Centre, Ormiston, Brisbane.



PILGRIM DAYS:

Tuesday 19 April; Saturday 21 May;
Wednesday 8 June; Tuesday 9 August;
Saturday 22 October.

Bookings are essential

(max. 60 pilgrims each day)

Send/email: Your name, contact

details and medical dietary needs to:

ebadmin @bne.catholic.net.au

*at least 7 days before your
chosen pilgrim day.*



Santa Teresa is located to the east of Brisbane at Ormiston, some 30 kilometres from the CBD — approximately a 45 minute drive from both the City and the Brisbane airport.

There is a train service from the City to Ormiston, (Cleveland line). It is a 25 minute walk to Santa Teresa along Wellington Street.

Address: 267 Wellington Street Ormiston.
(next door to the Carmelite Monastery and historic Ormiston House.

Arrive for a 9.30am start – by car
(or by train walking as a pilgrim from the station).

Introduction.

Outline for the Day.

Pilgrim guidebook.

Pray in the chapels and in the grounds.

Visit the Carmelite chapel next door.

Sacrament of Penance available.

Simple boxed lunch provided,
free + tea/coffee

Closing prayer at 3.30pm

Excerpt from 'Timely Prayers for the Year of Mercy'

from Meg Fennell

To You, O Almighty Triune God, do we pray:

- HELP US TO REMEMBER that Your blessings do not necessarily follow the logic of this world.
- HELP US TO REMEMBER that the worldly rich may be poor in spirit; and the materially poor may be spiritually rich.
- HELP US TO REMEMBER that in spite of, and because of, the beliefs and the actions of us and others, we must pray for a more just world in which all have enough; and none are left 'behind'.
- HELP US TO REMEMBER that while the world covets power, You bless the meek and humble (the long-suffering and the patient).
- HELP US TO REMEMBER that we may mourn without fearing death, knowing that through the Passion, Crucifixion and Resurrection, death has been trampled down by Death.



Vale Vivienne Lockley

In November last year, an amazing person left this earth. Vivienne Lockley is remembered as the beloved Wife of Paddy and tireless mother of 13, Grandmother to 26 & Great Grandmother to seven but in this Parish she is also remembered for the many years of volunteer work she provided by way of morning teas, fund-raisers and as a regular reader in the 80s and 90s. Vivienne went on to become the first ecumenical hospital chaplain so she could spread her care and kindness to even more people, regardless of their faith. Vivienne was also humble. Her reward was a laugh with friends and family and a good piece of cake. She inspired many and is greatly missed.



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