



Toorak Uniting Church

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Still Thinking: Generosity by Christopher Page

Last Sunday evening the *Compass* program on the ABC TV showed a documentary on Pope Francis. It followed his rise from a parish priest born, Jorge Mario Bergoglio to becoming the Archbishop of Buenos Aires in 1998; a Cardinal in 2001 and elected Pope and head of the Roman Catholic Church in March 2013. Although he was a member of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) he chose the papal name of Pope Frances.

Pope Francis is not an uncontroversial man. It is reported that he does not support unbridled capitalism, Marxism, or Marxist versions of liberation theology. He maintains the traditional views of the church regarding abortion, euthanasia, contraception, homosexuality, ordination of women, and priestly celibacy. He opposes consumerism, irresponsible development, and supports taking action on climate change; a focus of his papacy has been international diplomacy, helping to restore full diplomatic relations between the U.S. and Cuba. ^[1]

Nevertheless, Frances has caught the imagination of both Catholics and non - Catholics alike. And he has done this not through theological debate, doctrinal pronouncements or public pietism, but rather it was been his simplicity, clarity of purpose and genuine personal warmth. The Vatican hierarchies and Papal pomp and ceremony hold little attraction in a “post Christian” world. The collapse of absolute religious authority has left a vacuum that many believe can be filled only by a genuine experience of human spiritual generosity and gratitude. Frances said in a conversation with a group of young people: *Let us encourage the generosity which is typical of the young and help them to work actively in building a better world. Youth do not solely need material things. Above all, they need to have those non-material values which are the spiritual heart of a people ... spirituality, generosity, solidarity, perseverance, fraternity, and joy.* ^[2]

Generosity must be one of our common expressions of Christian faith and the good news. If God’s grace is to mean anything then in many ways it is an act of “wasteful” generosity. The lavishing of Grace on the undeserving can be regarded as wasted. Our story this morning illustrates an act of “wasteful” generosity by

Welcome to Toorak Uniting Church

We welcome all people irrespective of race, religion, political views, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, or age. Wherever you are on your faith journey, wherever you have come from and wherever you are going to; whatever you believe, whatever you do not believe, you are welcome here at Toorak Uniting Church.

Please come and join us after the service for fellowship and a cup of tea or coffee.

Mary which is placed in contrast to a legalistic interpretation of the religious enterprise by Judas. In the narrative Judas was right, the expensive perfume could have been sold and the money given to the poor. But his motivation, inspired by personal greed was wrong.

Unlike many today Frances sees young people not as selfish or self-serving, he sees them as generous. I wonder if by naming them as such they, like us, will rise to the occasion.

[1] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pope_Francis

[2] http://www.azquotes.com/author/5099-Pope_Francis/tag/generosity http://www.azquotes.com/author/5099-Pope_Francis/tag/generosity

ANNUAL REPORTS ARE DUE!

Please email to the office

Meeting of the Congregation and Call for Nominations

A meeting of the Congregation will be held on Sunday 17 April immediately after the 10.15 service. The agenda will be to elect various office holders, to receive the annual report for 2014, and to approve the annual financial report for 2014. Copies of these reports will be available from 3 April. Nominations are called for the position of **elder and non-elder member of Church Council**. Nominations are also called for the positions of **chair and secretary of the Congregation**, as the current term of the existing incumbents expires on June 30.

Members considering accepting nomination for all these positions are invited to discuss the duties with the minister before accepting nomination. Nomination forms are available from the office and must be returned to the office by Wed. 30 March at 12.00 noon.

Fellowship Team – Welcome Aboard!

Barbara McKinnon is proposing to convene a Fellowship team. The fellowship team will maintain a calendar of fellowship events for the year and coordinate the catering, setting up, serving and cleaning up at these events. If you would like to be involved as a team member please contact Barbara on 0405 987 890 or barbara.mckinnon@bigpond.com. If you would simply like your name to be added to a list of volunteers willing to assist with any catering, setting up, serving or cleaning up, please also contact Barbara and include details of what you would like to assist with.

Fellowship Luncheon Success

A highly enjoyable fellowship lunch followed the whole church family service on 28 Feb. Barbara McKinnon would particularly like to thank Thomson and Jemima Sennitt for their assistance with setting up, Anna Field, Jean Prest, Jacki Simonson, Christine Brown, June Downes and Fiona Thomas for the delicious salads and cake they provided. Their assistance along with that of Jenny Stewardson and Lyn Petersen made the lunch run very smoothly. Lenore Newnham deserves a special thank you for laundering the tablecloths.



“For the Beauty of the Earth” by Angela Abbott

Exhibition on until Mar. 24th.
Open 10.00-3.30 Mon-Fri.

Inspired by Hymn lyrics by F S Pierpoint
1835–1917 (Hymn 137, *T/S*)

Church Fundraising TODAY!

Please purchase some of our delicious home made cakes, slices and jam.

An opportunity for warm fellowship within our TUC congregation is offered each week as we gather for **morning tea following the 10.15am service**. A small band of congregants serves the tea and coffee regularly, but we are in need of two more people to commit to helping on the first Sunday of each month. It is a good way to greet your fellow parishioners and we have a group of 'emergency contacts' to assist on an occasion when you might need a substitute.

If you are willing to offer your service, please contact Christine Brown on 9822 9242.

In our thoughts and prayers:

Liliana Stahlberg thanks TUC for your support and asks that you continue to include Wolfgang in your prayers.

Easter Services

The week before Easter:

Palm Sunday, 20 March

9am Service:

10:15am Service: Communion

Theme: Growing Peace

Maundy Thursday, March 24

7:30pm – A service of Readings and Music

Good Friday, March 25

10:15am Good Friday

(Note time change to 10:15am!)

The story of the cross through readings and music

Easter Sunday, March 27

10:15am Easter Service

(No 9am Service)

Theme: Life's Great Contradictions

TUC CONGREGATIONAL BREAKFAST

Wednesday April 20th at 8 am – Medical Defence

We look forward to welcoming you to our autumn Congregational Breakfast to be held on **Wednesday April 20th at 8.00 am**.

Our speaker will be **Dr Elizabeth Lewis of AVANT**, the group that manages insurance of doctors and arbitration with patients. Dr Lewis has a long career in various aspects of medicine, in effect working on both sides: as a practising Doctor for many years and, more recently, for the Insurers. Her message is that 'Conciliation works!' – only 2% of disputes go to court. (Dr Lewis is an adherent at Scots Church, in the city.) Breakfast Donation \$20.

Diary Dates

Mon	14 Mar		Labour Day Holiday – office closed	
Thu	17 Mar	10.00am	Morning Group	Faichney
Thu	31 Mar	10.00am	Prayers For Christian Unity	St. Peter's
Sun	17 Apr	11.15am	Congregation AGM	Church
Wed	20 Apr	8.00am	Autumn Congregational Breakfast	Kinross
Fri	25 Mar	11.30am	Good Friday Witness Walk – leaves from St John's and finishes at TUC with hot cross buns to follow	
Sat	30 Apr	4-8pm	Kinross fundraising Scottish Dance	Hall

Kinross
Arts



Caledonia
Ceilidh Band
& Colin
MacLeod -
Scottish Fiddle
Guru

Special Fundraising Event

Ceilidh - Scottish Dance

Saturday 30th April 2016

**Fabulous Live Music, Dancing
and Scottish Fayre**
4pm - 8pm

Toorak Uniting Church Hall
603 Toorak Road, Toorak
(opposite Irving Road; Tram Stop 39)

\$30 Adult or \$50 for 2 people
\$20 Concession ; \$60 Families

Bookings

<http://www.trybooking.com/KOTE>
Enquiries 03 9829 0340
Email manager@kinrossarts.org.au
www.kinrossarts.org.au