



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM ANGLICAN MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA
- SUNDAY 1 JULY 2018

STEPS OF FAITH

With each step of the WAY we seek God. We are disciples of the WAY of Christ. With our hearts and minds open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit we are strengthened in faith and understanding. Our steps may falter, we may slip and slide, yet the Presence of the Holy One is within us and around us. So stride on as you take a fresh look at God's people and may your soul leap with love for his little ones.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Proverbs 3:5-6

Mothers' Union members in USA do not have numbers on their side, but their steps of faith lead them towards the poor and needy. 'They do not keep their prosperity to themselves; they share what they have with others at home and aboard.' As they respond to poverty and unemployment their faith inspired others to step out with them. Thanks be to God who cares for all.



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM ANGLICAN MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA
- SUNDAY 8 JULY 2018

SEASONS

A favourite dish in my family was a shoulder of lamb stuffed with seasoning, sewn together and then cooked in a tomato sauce and served with silverbeet/spinach. Consider the moments, days, seasons when you were delighted, when you were the source of delight for someone else. These moments are intermittent, seasonal, God-given. The moments in-between are seasonal, intermittent and God-given.

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven. Ecclesiastes 3:1

The seasons can be dangerous in Canada, especially in the north. Mothers' Union members support communities. They are committed to helping end gender-based violence while delighting in the seasonal observance of Mothering Sunday with simnel cake and by offering resources to churches.



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM ANGLICAN MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA

- SUNDAY 15 JULY 2018

CHURCH and COMMUNITY

The Church is the Body of Christ. The Gospels relate Jesus' radical ministry expecting that the closeness and familiarity of first century life would be understood by its readers. And some of us do know what it is to belong – to family, social club, the street, suburb. But Jesus' radical gospel stepped sideways from the village to the church, from the town to the church. WE ARE the Body of Christ. A community of the Spirit whose *opus operandi* is LOVE: Love which flows out to the village, town and city for it is there we will find our neighbour.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself. Luke 10: 27

Children are the focus of the love which motivates Mothers' Union members in Trinidad and Tobago in the West Indies. They have created homework communities where children are received supervised assistance. 'The interest in and the commitment to the children's holistic development is deep and abiding.' The Body of Christ embraces the community.



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM ANGLICAN MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA

- SUNDAY 22 JULY 2018

STABILITY

Stability was one of the precepts underpinning St Benedict's ideas for living in a world turned upside down by the fall of the Roman Empire. Stability brings you back to the centre point when you are wobbling around. A stable body can resist an impact, a stumble, in the way a rigid or a floppy body cannot. A rigid faith leaves no room for Trust. Lord, keep our feet on the ground and our hearts trusting.

God alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall never be moved. Psalm 62:2

Stable family life is encouraged by members of the Provinces of Canterbury and York in England. Ely and the diocese of Liverpool Mothers' Union have appointed family and children's workers. We give thanks to God for members in Derby who help to restore families whose stability has been overturned by death, divorce and bullying.



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM ANGLICAN MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA
SUNDAY 29 JULY 2018

SPIRITUAL INSIGHT

Human beings love to know things. They have a drive to search out truths, to sort out what's what. Some search deeper for a more profound understanding of life and many believe that 'insight' comes from an inner knowledge that just needs to be mined to give 'insight'. A Christian understanding attributes Spiritual Insight to God as his gift. 'O God, in knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life'. Collect for Peace BCP Morning Prayer. With this knowledge we are free to love and be loved. To see others with the love of God; this is our prayer.

And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best. Philippians 1:9-10a

In Barbados members have been involved with MULOA down to branch level. They desire and hope this global strategy and plan for Mothers' Union will propel them to reach those persons that are at risk, for example, the youth and other vulnerable groups. May God bless them with spiritual insight as they work for the Kingdom.



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM ANGLICAN MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA
SUNDAY 5 AUGUST 2018

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MOTHERS' UNION WORLDWIDE

'He's got the whole world in His hands': with these words, the spirit soars. As our prayer for our sisters in faith spreads across the globe in waves of love, our hearts are full. We belong, we share, we learn, we are inspired. We are humbled by the actions and dedication of our fellow members as across God's wondrous world we follow in the footsteps of Mary Sumner. Praise be to God.

All this day, O Lord, let me touch as many lives as possible for thee; and every life I touch, do thou by thy spirit quicken, whether through the word I speak, the prayer I breathe, or the life I live. Amen.
Mary Sumner's personal prayer written in 1876

New members have been enrolled in Belgium and France in the diocese of Europe. The branches have a worldwide vision fundraising for projects. One branch has a local concern supporting two

migrant families one of which is a migrant mother and daughters who escaped to prevent the daughters being subjected to female genital mutilation. We thank God for these members walking in Mary Sumner's footsteps.



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM ANGLICAN MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA
SUNDAY 12 AUGUST 2018

YOUTHFULNESS

Each age in life's span has its blessings, fears, disappointments and joys. Our Youth is/was neither better nor worse than any other. There are qualities of youthfulness, that if we were to embrace them, will give a sparkle to our spirit and freedom to our faith. Consider risk-taking with a touch of wisdom: not insisting on ending the argument in your favour for example. Or joy/exultation: giving thanks for rain and cold. Remember God delights in us! Let us be youthfully delightful and delighting.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and do not forget all his benefits – who satisfies you with god as long as you live so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. Psalm 103: 2, 5

Bless the Lord for members in Scotland who have representation in parliamentary groups advocating for those abused in prisons and schools. Their witness of caring and action and an awareness raising programme have borne fruit with a new branch opening. Their outlook is youthful because it risks following Jesus' imperative to seek out the lost and suffering.



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM ANGLICAN MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA
SUNDAY 19 AUGUST 2018

TIME for REST

'A mother's work is never done'; 'I don't know how I ever found time to go to work'; 'I feel guilty if I sit down and read'. Jesus had to leave his friends and hangers-on to pray: Jesus asked his disciples to sit with him and they fell asleep. Resting in God, resting our minds and bodies, these are both important spiritual exercises and need our full cooperation; need a conscious decision to leave the dishes, to lie on the couch without a device/radio/TV, to say our prayers. Here I am, Lord.

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul. Psalm 23: 1-3a

In New Zealand members have taken seriously the need for rest, prayer and reflection. They joined with the Anglican Association of Women to hold a quiet day and looked at topics such as women apostles and women in mission, such as Mary Sumner. Likewise members in Tonga are faithful in prayer, resting before their labours in support of education for young people.



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THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM ANGLICAN MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA
SUNDAY 26 AUGUST 2018

GRATITUDE

Saying ‘thank you’, making a decided act of gratitude isn’t merely a matter of manners, social etiquette. Gratitude is a spiritual response to the generosity of God the Creator and Sustainer of all things. Gratitude is a spiritual response to our brother Jesus, for sharing our human life, for his teaching about the generous love of God for all humankind, for overcoming death. Gratitude is the spiritual response to the presence of the Holy Spirit, filling us with love, and wisdom and generosity.

*As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to live your lives on him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.
Colossians 2: 6-7*

Lord, we are so grateful for the witness of our members in All-Ireland as they tirelessly serve their communities and campaign for social justice. We thank you that all they do is founded on faith and supported in prayer.



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THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM ANGLICAN MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA
SUNDAY 2 SEPTEMBER 2018

SOWING and REAPING

Sowing seeds in God’s good earth and reaping the produce is not a personal exercise for most people in cities. Nor is it a matter of life and death or of great joy and fulfilment. But with each issue of *Families Worldwide* we share the cycle of sowing and reaping with our brothers and sisters in other lands and in our own countryside. We remember to be generous when natural disasters strike; we ask for God’s mercy and protection; we know them by name.

May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy. Those who go out weeping bearing the seed for

sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves. Psalm 126: 5-6

In the Sudan we offer prayers for successful harvests, and that their communities will flourish as Mothers' Union members continue to enrich the lives of their sisters, sowing seeds of happiness and self respect.



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THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM ANGLICAN MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA
SUNDAY 9 SEPTEMBER 2018

LEARNING for LIFE

Much of our learning is by a sort of osmosis, it seeps in without our being fully aware. Advertisers depend on the process. Latent learning affects our perceptions and judgements. Our children and grandchildren gain learning for life as they 'take in' the values we espouse, the kindnesses we bestow, the choices we make about how we spend our time and money and, most importantly, whether what we say tallies with what we do. Our own learning is through prayer and reading that challenges and disturbs us.

Let the wise also hear and gain in learning, and the discerning acquire skill. Proverbs 1: 5

The members in Myanmar have recently been trained to conduct the Mothers' Union Parenting Programme with representatives from every diocese attending. The learning they gained they will transmit to families. We thank God that this will truly be learning for life for all involved.



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THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM ANGLICAN MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA
SUNDAY 16 SEPTEMBER 2018

FREEDOM and CAPTIVITY

How often do we realize we have been a captive audience to a television or radio programme that does not entertain nor present anything worthwhile. The sensational, the morbid, the controversial disturbs the mind and more importantly, starves and depresses the soul. A captive in a factory or to drudgery who depends of prayer for their sense of wellbeing may have more spiritual freedom than the person who chooses to feed on banality rather than nurture their relationship with God.

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and

release to the prisoners. Isaiah 61: 1

Loving God, we ask that you empower our members in North Eastern Caribbean & Aruba as they freely seek to bring the Gospel of Hope and Love to those in their communities captive to adverse circumstances.



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM ANGLICAN MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA
SUNDAY 23 SEPTEMBER 2018

HARMONY

‘When two or three are gathered together’ there may be a harmony of prayer and praise. We dream that hearts beating as one, voices declaring the same opinion, with no opposition, no contention will lead to perfect harmony. Harmony is best achieved when you ‘let me serve you, let me be as Christ to you.’

When we sing to God in heaven
we shall find such harmony,
born of all we’ve known together
of Christ’s love and agony.

Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Romans 16, 18

Members in India face the disharmony of gender-based violence and women’s disempowerment. May God’s mercy be upon as they champion the cause of harmony for all.