

Going Further: Week 1

In the Going Further material I am focussing on three aspects. They are:

1. additional Biblical or Prayer Book material
2. a section on how the Church can make a difference
3. and prompts for “have you considered”.

Before we start, I encourage people to share the disciplines they are going to on and anything they plan to give up this Lent.

Some people give up certain beverages or certain food such as wine and chocolate. The money they save is then given to the mission of the Church.

Other people take on an extra responsibility such as reading a Biblical book each week of Lent or attending a mid week service.

People may find it helpful to share past experiences to help them decide on their discipline.

Study One:

Additional Prayer Book Material.

1. One of the criticisms of liturgical Churches is that it is easy for people to know and say parts of the services by rote and not reflect on what they are saying. There is some truth in this comment so I invite you to explore the various confessions and absolutions or words of assurance in the Anglican Prayer (and if you have another Prayer Book, go through the service and find the confession and words of assurance).

After studying a selection of the various confessions and words of assurance as listed here, share your insights.

A Prayer Book for Australia:

pages 4 & 5
pages 21 & 22
pages 38 & 39
pages 52 & 53
page 109
page 120
pages 174 & 175

How often do you say the Lord’s Prayer. How does each section impact your life and faith?

2. Read and Study Matthew 4:1-11.

Matthew’s account of our Lord’s temptations provides more detail than Mark’s account.

Each time Jesus was tempted he replied by quoting Scripture.

Stones to bread - quoted Deuteronomy

Up on the pinnacle - Jesus quoted Scripture

Kingdoms of the world - and again Jesus quoted Scripture

I know that many children's activities have a Scripture memory verse section. However, it is important that adults learn Scripture as well. Reading is one thing, but being able to recite Scripture relevant to an occasion or situation, is another.

Making a Difference:

1. In some Churches the Greeting a Peace is more of a fellowship time. In most liturgies we confess our sins, we hear that God forgives if we truly repent and then we greet each other as the redeemed people of God.

Do we need to focus more on the Greeting of Peace, so that it is different to (and perhaps more meaningful) than our usual custom? Eg: Looking people in the eye as you greet them

2. All Churches face division from time to time. If those outside the Church see our division they are likely to the question of sincerity about our faith. Christians are not called to make a difference, they are called to be different, to show that they live their life according to Jesus Christ.

In what ways can we be different and in so doing, show the love and grace of our Lord in our communities?

Have you considered:

1. If your Parish has a Baptismal policy, review the policy for future consideration. If the Parish does not have a policy spend some time drafting a policy - and explaining why you have included specific content in that policy.
2. Every generation has to face the reality of temptation. We are living in a digital age and it appears that the breadth of sources of temptation is on the increase. How can the Church help people who are facing temptation? If you were asked for guidance in this area what would be your reply.
3. A short but true story. My great auntie who was very active in the Church and undertook a number of ministries had a stroke. A clergy person made a visit and said to her it was a shame that she would not exercise her ministries anymore. Her reply I cannot do the tasks I once did, but I can still pray. Discuss the scope of prayer a ministry.

Statistics reveal that many churches are ageing. People are not able to do what they did in the past. How can we help the people of God find new ministries that enable them to feel they are still serving their Lord.