

Whilst it may seem a strange choice for a reading normally at a funeral, it was David's desire that he was to farewelled from this community in which he found a home, acceptance, support and challenge over an 8 year or so period. As part of his journey in this congregation that gathers, albeit in a tight-knit but small community, he was intellectually stimulated, and able to feel safe and secure.

It is no secret that for David, his own mental and physical health was very much something that was an ongoing issue for him throughout his life. As we listen a bit later to the tributes prepared by his brother, together with tributes from the Rev'd Dr Don Stanley and Dr Bruce Felmingham, David's life was one of many challenges.

For David, he felt at time like both the mother and daughter mentioned in the Gospel passage. He was, almost at once, both the Syrophonician woman, and the daughter, tormented by what would be for David a living hell. Whether the institutions be in Sydney, Hobart, Launceston, St Vincent's, Sunshine, the Royal Melbourne or the Northern, the times spent in there were not always to see David at his best.

Mental illness is a difficult topic to raise in the community, and often, even on an occasion such as this, uncomfortable to address. But not to, for us today in honouring the gift of life that was shared with us by our loving God, would be to diminish not only David's life journey, but also, the many moments of grace that David not only received, but shared.

Many in our wider community, have in the past, simply put the people who were considered *out of mind* were put *out of sight*. Growing up in Tasmania, as David did from his teen years, there was the constant shadow and spectre of *New Norfolk*. At New Norfolk was known as the mental asylum. If you had what was colloquially known as a *breakdown*, it was off to New Norfolk for you. I recall that one of my great aunts, Jean, would only be allowed home for 4 weeks a year, usually over Christmas. I look back now and recognise a bipolar disorder with schizophrenic episodes: all now controllable with modern drugs, therapy and attention to detail.

Even though our mental health awareness has increased and continues to evolve, sometimes, the mental anguish that we face is likened to being possessed. One afternoon in this very Church, a quiet and amiable man held me at knife point for nearly 3 hours. When the police and Community Assessment team arrived, the rapid-fire nature of his bipolar and schizophrenia switched to extremely aggressive, then back to withdrawn. I remarked to one of the officers at the time, "No wonder people thought these people were possessed."

And no wonder the Syrophonician woman is prepared to do what she can to have her daughter at home, well and not stigmatised by the reality of her illness. And yes, it is an illness, not a possession.

David wasn't always convinced he had any issues. Well-read in matters of psychiatry, it was often a privilege to sit in on the Mental Health tribunals and listen to him prosecute his case for freedom, and the demonic nature of the pseudo-medical practices of psychiatry. He was able to argue different strands and thoughts, and when faced in one recent attempt by a hospital to begin electro-convulsive therapy, was able to draw together all his knowledge and successfully argue against the prevailing experts as to why this was not only unnecessary, but also a risk that would possibly leave him, once again in his life, with a failing memory.

Throughout all the time I journeyed with him over the past few years, there have been many moments that were both moving, encouraging, challenging and frustrating. You could easily say I had a very human relationship with David. Further to this, I, together with many of my colleagues were able to listen and share with David much of his faith journey, and certainty that being one with God in communion through Christ at the altar, all will be well. Many a phone call was made and received as David looked for the coming of the sacrament, and someone to spend, even if a short time, a time of prayer and reflection.

My move to the lower Macedon Shire did make this increasingly difficult for me, but I am extremely grateful, as is his brother Ian, to the community of Holy Apostles, Braybrook-Sunshine, and Fr Don Edgar, for their welcome and care of David over this past year. As Dr Don Stanley said, there is no doubt that for David, his faith and belief was strong. He wanted to be made whole, and that request in prayer and at one in the sacrament was to be a strong theme for him.

David could be witty, charming and bright, as well as mischievous, cunning and politically astute. I've seen all aspects. Even in his psychotic episodes, his intelligence and wit shone through, and his sense of being afforded respect and his rights quite strong. He successfully took the Northern Hospital to court for not allowing him to vote in an election: a precedent known as Paulin vs Northern Hospital now is enshrined to make sure that no-one on a community health order is denied access to vote.

So, I look at David's faith journey, and I reflect on the Syrophonician woman and her love for her daughter. It must have been hell for her to watch what unfolded. Even though the initial mission was to those who were considered the 'chosen', Israel, her faith and determination saw her prayers answered. She was granted her request, and the Messianic mission was shown to be for all people, no matter what they face. For us, as the Body of Christ, this is equally as

important in our care of those who, like the Greeks approaching Andrew and Philip at the time of the Passover, asking the most important question of all, “Please Sir, we wish to see Jesus.”

David’s prayers included a release from the mental health order he was on. This occurred in the last week of his life. He wanted to return to Coburg and begin the University of the Third Age. This was not to be. He was nearly always polite and courteous to those caring for him, although calling one male nurse of Islander extraction “the ugliest nun I’ve ever seen” will be permanently etched in my memory!

David challenged my own views on care, and recently, euthanasia. He suffered 17 strokes and 3 heart attacks in a short period, mainly around the time of the legislation being presented to parliament. How easy it would have been to give in, but no, David was not ready to stop the fight. As in the first reading we heard from the prophet Jeremiah, David needed more time to

“...take your tambourines,
and go forth in the dance of the merrymakers.”

And that he did. He has now ascended into the heavenly city of Zion where he is free from any more anguish, and no doubt having many questions answered by our Lord. And although this will not happen here today as David wished, but I have no doubt that in heaven, David will sneak out the gates and have a smoke, before coming back in to find out more, and if necessary, press points of justice for all, especially those who are challenged by their own mental health.

I thank God for the privilege of knowing David: from the Central Coast of the North West of Tasmania, to Hobart, and bringing him back to my life here during my own tormented time in Richmond. He was truly a bright light for me and will always be a great inspiration.

May David, with all the redeemed and faithful, truly rest in peace, and may his great faith encourage our own journey towards wholeness in the Lord.

Fr Dennis Webster
8/8/2018

I have received the following tribute from David's younger brother, Ian.

Hello everyone.

My regrets that circumstances prevent me being with you to share in the celebration of David's life.

I thought for some time what I could write about him. There's so much. I have always felt the simplest glimpse of our immortality is how we live-on in each other's' stories. So, here's one of my favourites about David, courtesy of our father, Bill.

David had a serious accident with Bill and was in hospital for a very long time with a degree of memory loss. One day he said to Bill, "I'm not sure who I am." Bill asked, "who do you think you are." David gave it some thought and replied, "Clever? ... Fun? ... Hopefully kind?"

To say that David's life in the following years was complex doesn't quite do it justice. He touched so many people's journeys leaving, as was the case with my journey in song and performance and as a person, irrevocable changed, profoundly richer and blessed with his particularly irreverent pulse of optimism.

Beating below the skin of his trials and misfortunes endured the heart that sang the true measure of his worth, lived out, and understood through the love of those he drew into his life.

As he is welcomed into his family of faith, into the arms of the saviour his steps led him to, no doubt he'll probably ask if it's still possible to nip out for the odd smoke every now and then. If Jesus is who I think he is, he'll laugh and say, "if it were anyone else but you, David

..." Clever ... Fun ... Mostly kind. What an inspiring achievement. I pray any of us might achieve such an epitaph. That we all might attain such a destiny.

Love and strength, Ian

From the Rev'd Dr Don and Caroline Stanley

From contact with David's care home I learned that he had been admitted to the RMH and so I rang him at the hospital on Friday 21 July, just over a week before he died. We had a good chat about many things. Unbeknown to me at the time, this was to be my last conversation with David. I told him I would phone again. Because we had discussed his future beyond his time of hospitalization, I had no sense that he was so close to the grave.

I was really saddened about David's death as I have travelled on a remarkable journey with him for over three decades. He's been my friend throughout and I've had the privilege of supporting him through many ups and downs, both in Tasmania and later in Melbourne. Thus his death represents to me the sad end of an era, an era full of extraordinary memories.

We first met in my office in the mid 1980s when I was Manager of ABC Television in Tasmania. It was out of that meeting that David was given a six-month attachment to our News and Current Affairs Dept. to help him in a media-related rehabilitation. That was the beginning of a journey which quickly evolved from being his employer to a personal friendship.

You may be interested to know that in that last phone call with David, an important topic was faith. The conversation confirmed what I had believed about David for many years, that deep down, he had what I would call a genuine Christian faith. I would say he understood the Gospel clearly and enjoyed forgiveness of sins and salvation through his trust in Jesus.

I think it's also true that David's opportunities to live out and grow in his faith, especially in the context of a church-based community, were hugely hampered by the extremely debilitating health and mental issues which constantly plagued him. Thus despite the sadness, I take much comfort in believing that David is now in a "better place" (in this case "better place" is not just a meaningless platitude), having inherited eternal life.

I know David appreciated your pastoral concern for him when attending St Stephens or through pastoral visits made by you (or one of your team members) while David was in a care home or hospital.

I enclose a collection of David's poetry. I would be grateful if you could a couple of examples on the day of his funeral.

Rebirth

The journey there
Was far less Godforsaken tedious
Than my return.

The here-again, gone-again moments
As I stumbled from the sunlight
Fading fast into the blackest hours
Carried my consciousness ever higher
Into the cusp of my dreams.

Then, as I emerged to see your smiling face
I realised my time had come
And my trial on Mother Earth was done.

Lucra, take me into your arms.
Sing out your scared rites.
I am with you just as then.
I am your changeling.

David Paulin 2008

Newstalk Wrap

Come on everybody, here's the news of the nation
Coming on your number one radio station.
You might think it's a bit of a pill
But we've got tonnes of time to kill.

Traffic updates by the hour;
Weather calls –
Watch out for showers
The Dow Jones index has collapsed
In fact the whole damned economy is in relapse

If you want to hear the cricket we'll bring you it all,
Wicket by wicket, ball by ball.
If footy's your fever we'll bring you the scores.
We'll have you glued to us begging for more.

We're the politicians curse.
We read their mind
And hold their purse.
From proceedings in the upper house
To the sex lives of each member's spouse.
We'll bring you all the shock and horror
Till you believe there's no tomorrow.

If you're after entertainment stay tuned to our show –
The death count in Afghanistan is really on the go.
We'll cover every second of the coming climate change
And we'll tell you every dollar that the market gains

If you think you've had enough
We have much less serious stuff.
We've chimpanzees that dance and sing.
And Wiley wombats who just do their thing.
Hear it all in solid state sound.
Its News that makes the world go round.

From Murdoch to the ABC
You wouldn't bring us home for tea,
but breakfast would not be the same
without our non stop info game

Come on every body it is time to enjoy
Our multi channelled, calibrated radio toy.
If you think its all too much
Remember we are all in touch
With every move you ever make.
To turn us off would be a big mistake.

If you don't listen we sure will
And some how you will pay the bill.
The price of silence is golden still
And way beyond your budget.
So stand up and deliver = you're our market.
Pay! Pay! Pay! – right through your ever loving ears!

David Paulin 2008

Catalyst

The cat pissed in my shoes today;
So I strolled the city streets,
Whilst people kept their distance,
Pretending not to notice I was there;
Stinking to the heavens
In respect of my old Tom.
An odorous task, you might well think,
But the stench of time always marches on.

And:

Why does the Good Lord so often bring
Such beautiful women my way
Just to serve me.
But not love me?

That stinks no less than my shoes, Dear Tom!

David Paulin 1998

MEMORIES: DAVID PAULIN

It was mid 1985 when David joined a meeting of the Kingston Tasmania branch of the community group known as Crossroads . This organisation was established by the UCA to help bridge the gap for persons with disabilities between treatment of their disability and community engagement and David was attracted by the activities of the group as he joined in most of these becoming mates with several individual Crossroaders .

There is no doubt these times were some of the most enjoyable David experienced. However his disability was never far away, manifest in euphoric moments when he appeared to be a confident, resilient person. His supporters through these euphoric periods were instrumental in maintaining his normal status paying off debts to financial institutions, attending court hearings and convincing the local police to forgo any action resulting from his euphoria.

David loved a party and Christmas in particular but it remained a source of aggregation for him. David struggled with Christmas and often ended up in trouble as a consequence.

He was an intelligent person and in his lucid times, capable of performing well above the norm. He was good enough to work briefly on ARC funded research relating to the ageing of the Australian population and on consultancies relating to the same issue. He was employed by the agency Anglicare mentoring clients who had themselves experience of David's mental challenges. There were 25 clients mentored located on the North West Coast of Tasmania.

David loved literature. He expressed this in various forms like poetry while his quest for knowledge was manifest in his attempts to pursue further study. Sadly, something always got in the way of his research goals so he was never going to realise his cherished dream of completing a post graduate degree in Theology even the wonderful support of the educational institutions in Victoria and Tasmania could not beat the backwash of the effects of his illness on research. During one euphoric episode, David created a company called Brumida a corruption of the names of David's preferred business partners :

Bru[bruce],mi[Michael],d[David]. The Vice Chancellor of the ANU at the time was surprised when he received an invitation to attend a board meeting Brumida. Things had to be carefully explained.

In the 2000s, David absconded from Tasmania apparently driven by pending legal actions in Tasmania and greener looking pastures in Victoria. It was not to be: his physical condition gradually deteriorated and he contracted diabetes and suffered all of the worst side effects of the disease before passing away. My contact with David was conducted on mobile phones. But I know from phone conversations with David that he always wanted to say thank you to all of the professional staff for their wonderful treatment of him.

And as for the man himself, he was one flower who did blossom and did not waste his fragrance on the desert air. [based on Thomas Grey [English Poet]]
VALE DAVID

BRUCE FELMINGHAM

An extract from Warren Fahey's site The Folklore Unit
Malcom J Turnbull,
Warren Fahey AM: founder of Larrikin Records

A word about Brumida itself. A loose collective of aspiring writers, playwrights, artists, poets and musicians, the organisation was the brainchild of a gifted young would-be entrepreneur David Paulin, recently arrived with his family from England, and settled in the cultural wilderness of Ulverstone. While a final year high school student in 1966, he and two other enthusiasts, Michael Raine and Bruce Fraser, founded Brumida in an attempt "to encourage almost anything creative among young people". (The word consists of the first letters of the boys' names). Fraser dropped out of the proceedings early on, but the group attracted the interest of other young locals ... most of them distinctly out-of-place within the politically conservative, fundamentalist Christian, sports and RSL-oriented coastal environment.

David Paulin subsequently found work in TV production with TNT 9 in Launceston and Brumida's activities were suspended. Impressed with the enthusiasm engendered by the June 1970 festival in Burnie, and recognising that a number of former Brumida members and associates were already participating in whatever live folksinging activity was around, he

reactivated the organisation and launched a series of folk events. As noted above, the first was a modest afternoon and evening “festival” at the Eastside.

Profits were directed to the Aboriginal Advancement League, a spokesman for which, Harry Penrose, addressed the audience during the proceedings.

With its first such venture successfully under Brumida’s belt, Paulin set his sights on larger events – two open air concerts in Burnie and a two-day “happening” in Launceston. This was the Woodstock era, of course. Julie Paulin recalls that considerable charm had to be exerted on local authorities before Brumida was permitted to stage the first festival, at the sound-shell in Burnie Park in early December 1970. She remembers (laughingly) that coastal policemen were recalled from leave in case the “hippy event” got out of hand.

A surreptitious drug-search at the concerts yielded nothing. The police clearly preferred to overlook (or failed to recognise) the fact that more than one nervous artist was imbibing Stone’s Green ginger wine (and lesser aperitifs) before going on stage

Subsequently David Paulin (via Brumida) mounted concerts and/or folk nights in Launceston, Ulverstone, Deloraine, Savage River and Devonport, offering (in his words) “the cream of Tasmania’s folk artists” (i.e. Brumida’s regular performing roster, in various combinations).

David Paulin’s enthusiasm for acoustic music, and for the seeming potential of a number of his peers, significantly increased the performing options available to Tasmanian folkies although some of his more ambitious schemes failed to take off.

David Paulin moved to Sydney to further his television career early in 1972.

Malcolm J Turnbull was present at David’s funeral