

I received a formal note of thanks this week from Sri Samy, the founder and CEO of Friends of Refugees (FOR), the organisation which we supported in the dinner at Christ Church, South Yarra, a few weeks ago now. Sri asked me to pass on to the community as a whole her appreciation, and that of the organisation, for our “spiritual and financial generosity” in supporting the dinner. She said that they were privileged to be given the opportunity to cater for the event and to be involved in raising its profile amongst the community. I would echo her thoughts, and look forward to continuing to explore ways in which we can support this grass-roots organisation in the future.

It has been six months since the Installation of The Most Reverend Michael Curry as presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church. This week he reflected on his first six months, and especially on the challenges of leading one of the United States’ oldest denominations at a time of conflict and change. I thought there was much in his reflection that spoke to our context as Anglicans in Australia, also.

When asked, for example, about how he saw the place that the Episcopal Church occupies in the broad religious profile that we have the United States now, his response was this: “The Episcopal Church probably represents a moderate voice, a centrist voice in the religious landscape. We’re a tradition that has historically been able to live with differences. And I think now we’re seeing the live that out in some new ways that — to be a church that really can embrace diverse, not only theological traditions or liturgical and worship styles and approaches, but people of all stripes and types. And that’s — I think that’s the Episcopal Church and the Anglican way at its best.”

When asked about politics, and whether he felt that the political landscape needed to change, he spoke of the common good. “Regardless of which side of the aisle you’re on — this isn’t a partisan statement — imagine our politics if we began to engage one another not from the perspective of my unenlightened self-interest, but from the perspective of our interests, the common good”, he said.

He expanded this idea, to say “I’m talking about a way of living that is deeply grounded in the kind of love that is not a greeting card for Valentine’s Day, but that is a way of living in this world and engaging it.” This is a great call and challenge for us, too...

May John & Charles Wesley, Bede of Jarrow, Augustine of Canterbury, and all the Saints walk with you this week... *Sam*