

NEW & VIEWS – FEBRUARY 2009

FROM THE REFLECTION LAST WEEK:

The Australian bush fires that have destroyed the lives and land and wild life with such devastation have left us all overwhelmed. Once they would have been called 'acts of God'! Today we must ask ourselves to what degree they are the result of human lifestyle. The victims are understandably looking for a scapegoat - be that arsonists, local government mismanagement or power supply company negligence. When things go so badly wrong we understandably want to blame someone. We could however consider the risk taken in choosing to live in the Australian bush that has for thousands of years lived in a cycle of burning and greening. The fires have cleared the land enabling new growth to emerge and Aboriginal peoples understanding this undertook controlled burning and clearing to manage the cycle. In current times clearing land of trees and bush around homesteads in these places on the edge of the bush has been discouraged leaving townships and people vulnerable to the speed and intensity of the bush fires that rage from time to time. The current climate changes and weather patterns have exacerbated the problem. We must face ourselves at such times and ask how we can live in harmony with our environment, recognising our interdependence in staying safe and growing. Our faith reminds us that nothing is lost in the mind of God and that God's love and the courage to start all over again will be present amongst those whose lives have been devastated. We pray for them and hold them in our mind and prayers at this time.

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT:

Wednesday marks the beginning of the 40 days of the Liturgical season of Lent. Traditionally it has been a season of fasting and repentance. Today we are more likely to be invited to pause frequently in an intentional way and bring to mind our lives and our world. We are encouraged to note those things which we wish to let go so they no longer inhibit our ability to live fully. We are invited to remember that no matter what is happening in the world or for us personally, we are never alone. God's unwavering presence is amongst us. In today's world with the prevalence of the focus on the individual: individual wants and success and personal goal achievement, we do Feb 09 well to recall that our Christian gospel is based in community and in interdependence. The gospel invites us to consider the wellbeing of others as well as ourselves and to strive for neighbourliness. This is a lifestyle aspiration and a vision that as church we can offer with enthusiasm. It may just be that our gospel message of the surrounding and healing love of God that binds us all together and invites us to befriend one another is needed more today than it has been for a number of years. It is in learning again how to live interdependently and in harmony with the earth and other creatures that the resurrection life of Easter will be found.