

MINISTER'S LETTER

Dreaming on the corner of Booran and North

If ever there was a time for dreaming good dreams, it is now.

In a time when indigenous people around the world are re-asserting the value of their various dreamtimes, we too might reawaken to the value of our dreams. In our enlightened world where facts have ruled supreme, and logic has been the basis of much of our thinking we, in the faith called "Christian", have largely lost touch with our founding stories, reciting them "religiously", but moved less and less by their essential magic. The resulting shallowness has left us impoverished. Now we are beginning to understand again that our lost dream-time is not just a collection of stories to entertain or to back up moral messages and teachings, but is a foundation for self-understanding.

"How, then, shall we dream", you might ask, "and what should be the content of our dreams — right now, in Ormond?"

There is the faith tradition, of course. The stories of the Hebrew Scriptures, chronicling the growing understanding of the ways and thoughts of God, discerned over eons by the people of Israel. Then there is the perspective on that tradition provided by the life and teachings of Jesus. Dreams of God becoming flesh. Dreams of a suffering God. Dreams of freely given grace. Dreams of unconditional love. Dreams often only partly understood, but "true" nevertheless.

But there are also new dreams — dreams about the here and now. These are not dreams delivered in packaged form — neatly glad-wrapped; these are dreams to be made, worked-on, constructed, formed and (yes) lived. The dreams that count are the dreams that capture the essence of our moment, that spark our imagination, that stir us at our very core. The dreams that count, in other words, are the dreams that drive our actions.

The big cluster of dreams for our day are dreams about the chances of our survival. Will there be a human race in 100 to 200 years time? Probably there will be. Will it be a human race that we recognise? Probably not! A race dealing with a new climate — a new climate-normal. Fewer animals. Fewer species. Greater extremes. The gap between haves and have-nots will be wider. The gap between the knowledge-rich and the oppressed knowledge-poor will be more extreme than ever. White supremacy may be resurgent. Gender inequality may still be with us. All of this not so much a dream as a nightmare.