

what is arising for each of us as we pray the Examen individually. We may move through the steps of the Examen in our sharing, giving us each a chance to share what we are thankful for, where we feel God's presence, where we are struggling to feel God's presence, and what we are hopeful or fearful of as we look to the future. Praying the Examen means we never run out of things to talk about!

4. The Examen helps us unpack what's going on in our relationship.

The Examen serves as a way for us to name what is happening between the two of us. Perhaps we feel we are "off," and praying the Examen and sharing our responses might help us name that we feel "off" due to the focus on children's activities with little time for us, or perhaps we are a little too addicted to the newest TV show we are watching and instead we need time just to talk. Like the Examen does in all aspects of our lives, it helps us name what is causing consolation and desolation in our relationship with each other.

5. The Examen helps us make major decisions.

Chris and I lean hard and heavy on the Examen when we need to make big decisions as a couple. Looking back at our 13 years of marriage, I can name multiple times the Examen grounded us in God and in the values of our faith as we discerned graduate school for Chris, career moves, having children, raising children, how to spend our money, what home to buy, and on and on. The Examen offers us a way to see which of these decisions will deepen our relationship with God and each other, and which decisions will not.

Chris and I tap into the power of Ignatian spirituality to strengthen our marriage and guide us through life's many ups and downs. It is not uncommon for me to say to people: "If it weren't for the gifts of Ignatian spirituality in our lives, we would be flat on our faces when things got tough." The gift of Ignatian wisdom is the history and legacy of this spirituality providing pathways to live deeper, fuller lives of meaning and purpose. A key prayer tool of Ignatian spirituality is the [Examen](#), and I invite you to use this prayer tool in your marriage. I assure you, it will be an invaluable asset in your relationship!

GOD WANTS OUR FRIENDSHIP By William A. Barry, SJ

From A Friendship Like No Other:

Experiencing God's Amazing Embrace

What does God want in creating us? My stand is that what God wants is friendship.

To forestall immediate objections, let me say that I do not mean that God is lonely and therefore needs our friendship. This is a romantic and quite unorthodox notion that makes God ultimately unbelievable. No, I maintain that God—out of the abundance of divine relational life, not any need for us—desires humans into existence for the sake of friendship.

Better Than He's Made Out to Be This thesis may sound strange, because it runs counter to much teaching about God. To be honest, I questioned it myself when I first began to think it through. Mind you, I have been writing about prayer as a personal relationship for many years, maintaining that God wants such a relationship with us, and I have used the analogy of a personal relationship between two people to describe the developing relationship between God and us. But the notion that God wants our friendship did not easily follow. Whenever it reared its head, I shrugged it off as a fancy not to be taken seriously. After all, I had been raised with the standard catechism answer: "God made me to know him and love him and serve him in this world and to be happy with him -forever in the next." As far as I can remember, no one ever interpreted this as implying that God wants my friendship.

But over the past few years, as my own relationship with God has deepened and I have listened to people talk about how God relates to them, I have become convinced that the best analogy for the relationship God wants with us is friendship. I began to use this kind of language in talks and articles and found that it resonated with others. I hope that you will find similar reso-

nance and will trust your experience more fully. I can think of nothing that would please me more than to hear that you, and many others, have come to find God "better than he's made out to be," as my Irish mother once put it. I believe that God would also be pleased.

Fear or Friendship? But in order for us to trust this experience of God as friend, we must move beyond our feelings of fear of God. The teaching that most older Christians received about God induced fear of God rather than the feelings invoked by the term *friend*. I still meet more people who fear God rather than feel warm and friendly toward God. Does the idea of friendship with God figure into your experience of religious teaching and worship? I suspect that it does not.

The idea, however, has an ancient heritage. It can be defended as orthodox, perhaps even as the best reading of the developing revelation of God contained in the Bible. I was encouraged to undertake this book, after a number of false starts, by reading Liz Carmichael's *Friendship: Interpreting Christian Love*, a scholarly book that shows that there is an enduring tradition of identifying *caritas* (love or charity) with friendship, and thus defining God as friendship.

Two examples of this tradition cited by Carmichael will suffice. Aelred, the 12th century English Cistercian abbot of Rievaulx, developed his own variant of John's "God is love" (1 John 4:16): "Shall I say . . . God is friendship?" A century later, Thomas Aquinas defined *caritas* as friendship with God. Both writers knew the text from the first letter of John in its Latin form: "Deus caritas est."

An Idea Whose Time Has Come This notion of friendship with God seems to have waxed and waned throughout history. It is possible that preachers and teachers of religion fear that embracing the idea of friendship with God may lead to effacing the mystery and awesomeness of God, and so they hesitate to talk about it. But I am convinced, as is Carmichael, that this is an idea whose time has come, and none too soon for the future of our world—as I hope will become clear as we proceed. For one thing, fear of God has closed off a closer relationship with God in many people I have met, and they seem drawn by the notion of friendship. For another, friendship with God leads to a wider and wider circle of friends as we realize that God's desire for friendship includes all people.

As noted, much of our teaching about God has stressed fear of God. And why not? The psalmist writes: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom" (Psalm 111:10). But the fear of the Lord extolled in the psalm is a far cry from the fear instilled by religious teaching, which leads people to keep their distance from God. The psalms surely were not written to keep people far from God, but just as bad news sells better than good in the media, so, too, hellfire and brimstone make for more compelling teaching and preaching. But God is short-changed by such teaching and preaching tactics, and so are we.

The Downside of Fear The emphasis on hellfire may have salutary effects on the spiritual life in the short haul, but it can be argued that the long-haul effects leave something to be desired, especially when the threats no longer seem to hold. Witness what happened to the practice, among Roman Catholics, of the sacrament of reconciliation (called confession prior to the Second Vatican Council): as soon as Catholics learned after Vatican II that they would not go to hell as easily as they had been taught and that confession was necessary only if they had committed serious sins, they drifted away from its use in huge numbers and have not returned, in spite of much hand-wringing on the part of bishops and priests and the real benefits that can come from a healthy use of this lovely rite. If fear is the principal factor used to enforce a religious practice, the practice will end when the fear is removed, and it will be difficult indeed to bring about its renewal.

Worse still, the emphasis on hellfire and brimstone gives God a bad name. One can read the Bible as a story of the progressive revelation of God—a God of compassion. Jesus' use of

the tender word *Abba*—"dear Father"—for God is the culmination of this progressive revelation.

The "fear of the Lord" that is the beginning of wisdom is a healthy realization of God's awesomeness. God is fascinating and awe-inspiring, even terrifying, as the theologian Rudolf Otto put it. But suppose for a moment that God, who is Mystery itself—awesome, terrible, and unknowable—wants our friendship. Then the beginning of wisdom might be an acceptance of God's offer, even though accepting it proves to be daunting, challenging, and even a bit frightening.

An Invitation to Friendship What I hope you will find in this book is an invitation to engage in a relationship of friendship with God and in a dialogue with me. In the book, I do not provide answers so much as make suggestions and ask you to either try a suggested approach or reflect on your own experience in light of my suggestions. I hope that this will help you become a friend of God; the book will not attain my purpose if all you get out of it are ideas.

In part 1 of the book, I will first examine human friendship as the best analogy for what God wants with us, and then I will offer some exercises to help you determine if the notion of friendship fits your relationship with God or to motivate you to try such a way of relating to God. In part 2, I will provide meditations on questions and issues that I have had to confront as I have reflected on the conviction that God wants my friendship. I hope that they will be helpful to you as you confront your own questions. Finally, in part 3, I will take up the questions of where we find God and how we distinguish the influence of God's Spirit on our experience from other influences.

As we begin this spiritual journey together, let us pray this prayer of St. Anselm of Canterbury, which he made to God as he began one of his theological works, and which I used daily as I began writing this book:

Teach me to seek you,
and reveal yourself to me as I seek;
for unless you instruct me
I cannot seek you,
and unless you reveal yourself
I cannot find you.

Let me seek you in desiring you;
let me desire you in seeking you.
Let me find you in loving you;
let me love you in finding you.

-*A Friendship Like No Other:*

Experiencing God's Amazing Embrace by William A. Barry, SJ.

CHURCH WON'T 'BUTT OUT' OF ENVIRONMENT ISSUES The Suva archbishop gave first-hand insight into the plight of Pacific islanders affected by rising sea levels as a result of climate change. Archbishop Mark Coleridge says the Church is not about to "butt out" of debates over environmental concerns. Source: *The Catholic Leader*.

He offered that assurance in his response to a presentation given in Brisbane by president of the Oceania Federation of Catholic Bishops Conferences Archbishop Peter Loy Chong of Suva, Fiji. Archbishop Chong gave first-hand insight into the plight of Pacific islanders affected by rising sea levels as a result of climate change, and other examples of environmental degradation. The Fiji Church leader was a guest of Brisbane archdiocese for the start of the international Season of Creation (September 1-October 4) and the launch of the Living Laudato Si' project in the archdiocese. Responding to Archbishop Chong's "powerful" presentation, Archbishop Coleridge said when the Church responds to environmental issues "which are literally life and death, we're accused of interfering in matters that do not pertain to us."

He cited the example of a senior member of the clergy who had preached a homily to a Sunday congregation for the launch of the Season of Creation "only to have a lady appear at the sacrificial door after Mass and say, 'I didn't come to Mass to have you

talk to me about climate change'".

"Now, there is the problem . . . because, the whole question of ecological concern in the mind of many, many people is really all about politics and ideology, economy and science, and, therefore 'Religious people, steer clear – butt out', is what you hear constantly," the Archbishop said.

"It was the reaction that greeted (Pope Francis's 2015 encyclical) Laudato Si' (On Care for Our Common Home)."

He said the Church needs to find its own "utterly distinctive voice in the cacophony, and speak, not as a politician, not as an ideologue, not as an activist, not as a lobbyist, not as a scientist, not as an economist, but to speak with the voice of the Bible which has profound and powerful and endlessly fresh things to say in this conversation, and God help us if that voice falls silent."

MAY I INTRODUCE MARY OF NAZARETH Mary of Nazareth knew very well what it meant to be strong. She was strong enough to know that she had been favored by God when the society said she couldn't be so favored, and the tradition said she wouldn't be so favored.

She was strong enough to realize the strength of another woman when she went to Elizabeth for support and affirmation rather than to the synagogue to try to persuade the priests of the legitimacy of their visions, or to the government for protection, or even to the men to whom they were espoused to explain or cajole or plead.

She was strong enough to bring the right concerns, the right questions, the right witness, the right insight into our world, even if it meant questioning the angels.

At Cana she was strong enough to insist on miracles and to get them. She was strong enough never to give up, not to be afraid, to begin over again and again and again, after Bethlehem, and after Egypt, and after the crucifixion.

Mary is not simply "Mary, the Mother of God." No, on the contrary. The Mother of God is the image of women everywhere. The Mother of God is Mary, independent woman; Mary, the unmarried mother; Mary, the homeless woman; Mary, the political refugee; Mary, the Third World woman; Mary, the mother of the condemned; Mary, the widow who outlives her child; Mary, the woman of our time who shares the divine plan of salvation; Mary, the bearer of Christ. Mary of Nazareth made feminism an article of the faith, and power holy. Mary shows us the sanctifying power of a human being who has become fully human. —*Introduction to 2020 Joan Chittister Calendar (from Women Strength: Modern Church, Modern Woman by Joan Chittister).*

Pope to TV journalists: Local news v national news

Pope Francis overturned a frequent cliché in the world of journalism when he told local Italian television journalists, producers and technical staff, that "local news is no less important than national news". Local news and information is actually more genuine and authentic because it communicates "the voice of the people", in all aspects of peoples' social, cultural and spiritual life. Local information gives space to local realities and cultures to news that would not be broadcast otherwise. More than ever, we need news to be communicated completely and thoughtfully, "so as to encourage reflection".

"Regional information comes from the territory with a very precise mission, which is expressed in two directions. The first is to immerse itself in the everyday, in local reality, made up of people, events, projects, problems and hopes". The second is to transmit that reality to a wider audience. It also means giving "voice to poverty, challenges, and local emergencies", as well as to "testimonies of faith".

Pope Francis concluded by encouraging television journalists and staff to continue telling the stories, and making known "those authentic realities that are still found in many corners of Italy: realities that do not give in to indifference, that do not remain silent in the face of injustice, that do not follow fashions. There is a "submerged ocean of goodness", said the Pope, "that deserves to be known".

The Liturgy of the Word

SACRED HEART PARISH

TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

(Year C) 22/9/2019

Weekend Masses: Saturday Vigil 6pm Moruya; Sunday at 'The Pines', Tuross 8am; Moruya 10am
Weekday Masses: Monday Communion Service 9.15am; Weekday Masses: Tues 5.30pm, Thurs & Fri 9.15am. Note: This week, no 9.15am Mass. Wednesdays 2pm Banksia Village -**Rosary** after Mass

Reconciliation: Saturday 10—10.30am
Baptisms, Anointings, Weddings & Funerals by appointment.

For the sick: Fr Kevin Murphy, Peter Morris, Debbie Morris, Gail Moss, Kay Morton, Lauri-Anne Foran, John Bolton & Olivia Russell (baby).

opportunities are many and diverse. Have a go! A sheet is available at the entrance of the church to sign up for something. It doesn't have to be for the rest of your life: just as long as you wish! SA

GROUPS OF CATHOLICS WHO CARE Next Sunday 3pm, we are calling together all the Catholic groups across the towns of our parish, not just Moruya, to share a little on what each group is doing for people in need of a connection in some way. We are starting just with our fellow Catholics, and subsequently to look into a more broadly based gathering. VENUE: St Mary's Year 6 classrooms. Thanks to St Mary's for their kindness and generosity!

PRAYER FOR THE BLESSING OF RAIN
Lord God,
Bless Australia – our *Great South Land of the Holy Spirit*.
Grant, that as the *Cross* shines in our southern skies,
so may Christ bring light to our nation,
to its peoples old and new.
May we receive the blessing of abundant rain
so that the "desert blooms with the life that lies in wait."
We ask this through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

5 WAYS IGNATIAN EXAMEN HELPS IN MARRIAGE

By Becky Eldredge I remain thankful for all who taught me Ignatian spirituality. It is not only the spirituality that guides my relationship with God, but it is also the spirituality that guides my marriage. Here are five ways the Examen can play a role in marriage.

1. The Examen helps us pray our marriage.

When I teach someone about the Examen, I often say, "It helps you pray your life." Our relationships and marriages are significant pieces of our lives. The Examen helps us bring all of our lives before God, and our relationships are part of this. The Examen provides a framework to pray through all aspects of your marriage: emotional, spiritual, physical, and social. Daily interactions with our spouse are brought before God, and God can help us see where we gave or showed love to our spouse, where we received love from our spouse, and where we could do better in showing love for our spouse.

2. The Examen guides us in making small decisions.

The Examen guides us to know what steps to take on a daily basis. It helps us know what brings an increase of faith, hope, and love into our marriage, and what brings a decrease of faith, hope, and love into our marriage. It might help us know that we are in need of quality time together or that we are saying yes to other things that compete with keeping our relationships a priority. The Examen acts as a rudder, slowly helping us shift and make choices that help us both continue to grow in God.

3. The Examen leads to deeper reflection and conversation.

My husband Chris and I check in with each other regularly on

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Cleaner: Mrs Sue Fawcett

Tuross Caring Group: 0497 315 534

Moruya Caring Group: 0431 354 993

PARISH SCHOOLS: St Mary's Parish Primary School

Principal: Mrs Noelene O'Neill

Carroll College Principal: Mrs Jacqui Heffernan

20 CHILDREN'S FIRST EUCHARIST Last Sunday's Mass for the First Eucharist for twenty children was a beautiful event. Congratulations this day to Jemma Handley, Kai Woodford, Taylah Cassidy, Sonny Cottington, Lily and Heidi Van Weerdenburg, Ruby Mullins, Archer Schuchmann, Lexie Phelan, Zac Whipp, Jack McCarthy, Kyle Senger, McKinlay Harris, Marguerite James, Austin Enright, Ava Donnelly, Emily Foran, Ruby Mullins, Kaleb Dowling, Morgan Browne and Bailey Wilson Mitchell. May they and all their fellow students, especially the cast of angels who came specifically to support them, family members, et al.

Mc (Thanks also to the staff, through REC Fran Devonald and Year Three teachers, Rebecca Keogh and Jessica White, for all the work and effort put into the preparations for the day.

inc **BAM:** The 2019 St Mary's production of "BAM", the musical was a marvelous event that so many of us from here enjoyed.

Mc (What an abundance of talent from those on-stage and back-stage. Thanks especially to the writer, Elodie de Rover, a past pupil of St Mary's, and to Jessie White, Fran Devonald and Hayley Van Weerdenberg, and so many others, especially the Principal, Mrs Noelene O'Neill, and Deputy Principal, Marg

Mc (Croese. There may well be some careers in show business coming out of this!

Ed (I still don't know what BAM means; my best guess is I think it means a whole lot of things for some future time when children rule the world - even if just for a while. I've also certainly been thinking of the children of the world giving great world leadership in the world's biggest moral issue of climate change.

CARROLL COLLEGE YEAR 12 GRADUATION MASS:

This big annual event and associated Awards Ceremony commences at 10am, Wednesday, 25 September, at Carroll College. Let us pray for the Year 12s of 2019, in thanks for all they have contributed to the College and the area, in so many ways. May the subsequent stages of their lives be further sanctified by their experiences and memories of their K-12 Pathways from St Bernard's and St Mary's, as well as Carroll College.

Congratulations to Mrs Jacqui Heffernan, Principal, and all the tremendous staff members who have led these young people to where they are today, in collaboration with the parents, 'the first educators of their children.

NOTE: *With this Mass having a start at 10am, there will be no Mass in the Parish Church, but there will be a Mass at 2pm at Banksia Village, Broulee, to which all are welcome.*

PARISH & MINISTRIES: Let us pray in thanks for all those who minister to us, our fellow parishioners, in a great variety of ways. They will be gathering later today for a little conviviality, getting to know one another better, in accordance with some of my earliest plans for the needs of the parish.

If anyone would like to get in to doing something, whether reading/proclaiming, flower arranging, cleaning, sacristy, Eucharistic ministry, music and/or singing, ... The needs/

Gospel Acclamation [2 Cor 8:9](#)

Alleluia, alleluia!

Jesus Christ was rich but he became poor,
to make you rich out of his poverty.

Alleluia!

Gospel

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke [16:1-13](#)

Jesus said to his disciples:

'There was a rich man and he had a steward who was denounced to him

for being wasteful with his property.

He called for the man and said,

"What is this I hear about you?

Draw me up an account of your stewardship

because you are not to be my steward any longer."

Then the steward said to himself,

"Now that my master is taking the stewardship from me, what am I to do? Dig? I am not strong enough.

Go begging? I should be too ashamed.

Ah, I know what I will do to make sure

that when I am dismissed from office

there will be some to welcome me into their homes."

'Then he called his master's debtors one by one.

To the first he said, "How much do you owe my master?"

"One hundred measures of oil," was the reply.

The steward said, "Here, take your bond;

sit down straight away and write fifty."

To another he said, "And you, sir, how much do you owe?"

"One hundred measures of wheat," was the reply.

The steward said, "Here, take your bond and write eighty."

'The master praised the dishonest steward for his astuteness.

For the children of this world are more astute in dealing with their own kind than are the children of light.

'And so I tell you this: use money, tainted as it is, to win you friends, and thus make sure that when it fails you, they will welcome you into the tents of eternity.

The man who can be trusted in little things

can be trusted in great;

the man who is dishonest in little things

will be dishonest in great.

If then you cannot be trusted with money,

that tainted thing, who will trust you with genuine riches?

And if you cannot be trusted with what is not yours,

who will give you what is your very own?

'No servant can be the slave of two masters:

he will either hate the first and love the second,

or treat the first with respect and the second with scorn.

You cannot be the slave both of God and of money.'

A reading from the prophet Amos [8:4-7](#)

Listen to this, you who trample on the needy and try to suppress the poor people of the country,

you who say, 'When will New Moon be over

so that we can sell our corn,

and sabbath, so that we can market our wheat?

Then by lowering the bushel, raising the shekel,

by swindling and tampering with the scales,

we can buy up the poor for money,

and the needy for a pair of sandals,

and get a price even for the sweepings of the wheat.'

The Lord swears it by the pride of Jacob,

'Never will I forget a single thing you have done.'

Responsorial Psalm [Ps 112:1-2. 4-8. R. see vv.1. 7](#)

(R.) Praise the Lord who lifts up the poor.

1. Praise, O servants of the Lord,

praise the name of the Lord!

May the name of the Lord be blessed

both now and for evermore! (R.)

2. High above all nations is the Lord,

above the heavens his glory.

Who is like the Lord, our God,

who has risen on high to his throne

yet stoops from the heights to look down,

to look down upon heaven and earth? (R.)

3. From the dust he lifts up the lowly,

from the dunghheap he raises the poor

to set him in the company of princes,

yes, with the princes of his people. (R.)

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to Timothy [2:1-8](#)

My advice is that, first of all,

there should be prayers offered for everyone

- petitions, intercessions and thanksgiving -

and especially for kings and others in authority,

so that we may be able to live religious and reverent lives in peace and quiet.

To do this is right, and will please God our saviour:

he wants everyone to be saved

and reach full knowledge of the truth.

For there is only one God, and there is only one mediator

between God and mankind, himself a man, Christ Jesus,

who sacrificed himself as a ransom for them all.

He is the evidence of this, sent at the appointed time,

and I have been named a herald and apostle of it and

- I am telling the truth and no lie -

a teacher of the faith and the truth to the pagans.

In every place, then, I want the men

to lift their hands up reverently in prayer,

with no anger or argument.