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GUIDE TO THE TABLE AT  
THE WEST DOOR.



# **St Peter's Church**

A Guide to the  
Anglican  
Parish Church  
of Cremorne  
Sydney

# A GUIDE TO THE PARISH CHURCH OF THE ANGLICAN COMMUNITY OF CREMORNE, SYDNEY

## ***BRIEF HISTORY***

This parish began an independent life in 1908 as an off-shoot from St Augustine's, Neutral Bay. The sanctuary, tower, transepts and first bay of the nave were built in 1909 and opened for worship in May that year. The rest of the nave, the baptistry and porch were added in 1910 and dedicated by Archbishop Wright on 26 May 1911. The parish hall next door was begun in 1922 as a war memorial and opened in 1923 by William Morris Hughes MHR.

Ernest Alfred Scott, the architect of St Peter's, designed it in the light of the principles of the Oxford Movement, the nineteenth century Catholic Revival which had begun in the Church of England in the 1830s. The building is in the neo-Gothic Federation style.

*The worship practice of St Peter's places special emphasis on the sacraments of baptism, confirmation, the Eucharist, marriage, and anointing with holy oil. At St Peter's we have a rich liturgy, thoughtful preaching, fine music and art, with deep spirituality. We celebrate Eucharist at several services during the week, both in a simple "said" service and also a full "sung" service each Sunday. We celebrate major feast days with solemn liturgy. We are an inclusive, caring community.*



## ***CHURCH INTERIOR***

Passing through the glass doors we enter the nave, the main body of the church with its seats (or pews) facing the sanctuary at the east end. The word “nave” derives from the Latin for “ship”, a reminder that the church of God is the ark of salvation. The sanctuary arches are regarded as an impressive feature.



The whole church building is regarded as a holy place, consecrated to God, the place of assembly for God’s people as they come to hear the Word of God proclaimed and to celebrate the Sacraments.

To the left of the doors on a brass stand is a **holy water stoup**. Christian people often like to dip their fingers in the water as they enter the building, tracing the sign of the cross on themselves. In this way, one’s baptism is recalled and a believer also acknowledges the need for purity of heart in approaching God’s holy presence.

The stoup was sculpted in 1987 by May Barrie from a piece of chalcite (stalactite from the Jenolan Caves). It speaks of Christ, the corner stone of our faith, of the rock from which flowed the living water, of an egg as symbol of new life.



## ***BAPTISTRY***

To the right of the entrance is the baptistry. The Sacrament of Baptism is celebrated at the **sandstone font** which stands in the centre. The wooden cover is a gift from 1919.



**The Wall Hanging**, applying 'Kumihimo' brading, made by parishioners Pat Hargrave and Ros Haege, uses the symbolism of water and fish, early Christian symbols.



On the northern wall there is a **brass rubbing** of Sir Simon de Wensley (d1375AD) who was a Yorkshire parish priest. He is wearing traditional eucharistic vestments. This was a gift in 1987 of Fr John Thorne. The frame is from the old organ casework.



Of particular interest is the **embroidered image** of St Peter's memorial garden, with the signatures of parishioners on the Parish Roll in the centenary year 2009. Each signature has been minutely over-stitched.



### ***IN THE NAVE***

Just outside the baptistry on the south wall may be seen a pair of windows depicting Christ calling Simon Peter (our patron saint) and his brother Andrew to follow him.



These were designed by Sydney artist Lance Feeney, and dedicated in 1988, in memory of Ruth Krippner.

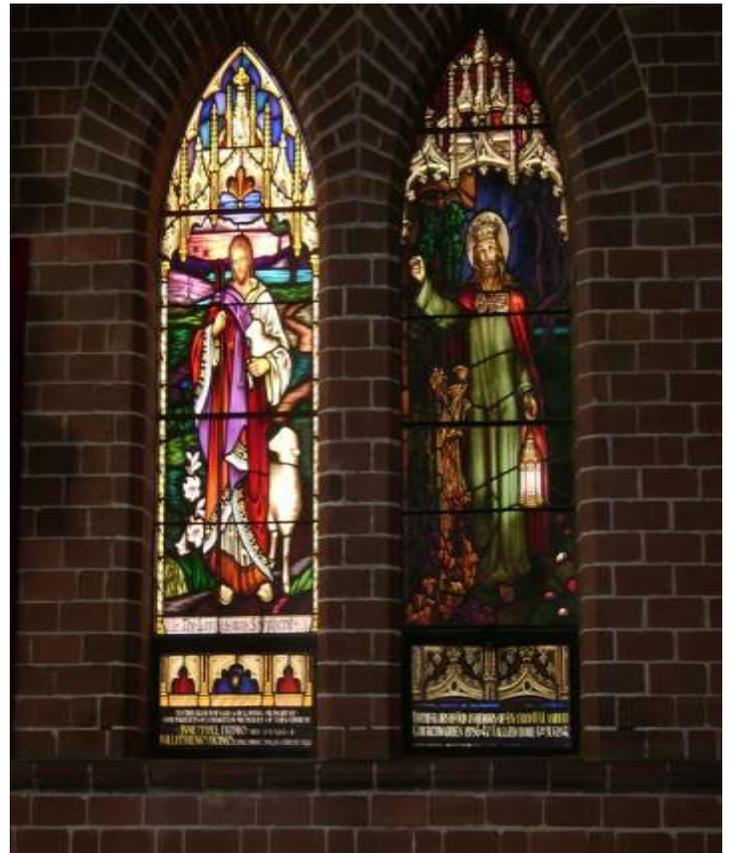
Next to it you see an icon, dubbed “Rabboni”, being Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene, created by Michael Galovic, a winner of the Blake Prize for Religious Art on two occasions. It was acquired in 2008 from the proceeds of a bequest by Nell Mackie.



Moving eastward, near the organ may be seen **two windows** designed by David Saunders of the Argyle Arts Centre, in this instance depicting the Risen Christ confirming Peter's importance in the Christian community as a great lover of the Lord who had responsibilities to match in the care of Christ's flock. These were installed in 1974 in memory of Leslie, Martha and Donald Colley and Florence and Alexander Walker.



Further along are **two windows** given as memorials to foundation members of this church and sometime church wardens many years ago. They depict Christ the Good Shepherd by Philip Handel, installed in the 1960s and the Light of the World, the latter based on Holman Hunt's famous painting in Keble College Oxford. It was unveiled by Archdeacon Robinson on 4 December 1949.



Opposite on the north wall is a **painting of the mystic, Mother Julian of Norwich** and scribe by another winner of the Blake Prize for Religious Art, Alan Oldfield. This was one of 21 paintings created by him of “The Revelation of Divine Love” for an exhibition in Norwich Cathedral in 1988. It was donated by Nell Mackie, in order to “recognise the role of women..” in the church.



Further to the east on the north wall is a hand-coloured **wood-block print** by the Japanese artist Watanabe. It is entitled “Descent from the Cross”. This was a gift in 1985 by Rev Ron O’Grady who worked for many years in Asia, where he met the artist.



The finely carved 1909 oak **pulpit**



Above the fine pulpit is a wooden **crucifix from Oberammergau** in Germany – a thanksgiving offering from a parishioner for being present at the famed Passion Play in 1980.



## ***THE ORGAN***

The original organ of the Church was built by Charles Richardson in 1914-1916. It was finished by Alex Hunter and Thomas Edwards in 1917. Unfortunately insufficient care meant that by 1958 it had ceased to perform and lay idle until 1978. In 1980 it was rebuilt by Tony Welby using some of the Hill and Eagles' pipework, and the console, from St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Manly.

The organ has 3 manuals, 26 ranks and approximately 1850 pipes. It now has an electro-pneumatic action. At the time of rebuilding it was removed from the base of the tower and placed in the south transept where it remains.

It is regarded as one of the finest parish organs in Sydney and is often used for recitals as well as accompanying the weekly sung services and liturgical festivals. St Peter's retains a professional organist and cantor.



## THE CHAPEL

This was created in the north transept in 1980 after the remodelling of the sanctuary and is known as The Chapel of Our Lady and St Andrew. It is used for weekday services and for private devotion. The **Icon** near the pulpit is of the Blessed Virgin Mary with the Infant Christ in her arms. In eastern iconography it is described as an icon of the Theotokos (literally “the God-bearer”) or Mother of God. Made in Greece, it is a replica of an original made in the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century period. Notice the angels who are holding the instruments of the Passion (cross, nails, spear, vinegar jar).



Also in the Chapel is the **embroidered prayer of St Francis**, made by Wilcie Urquhart, a parishioner, in 1989.



The entire north wall is filled by a vast, striking **stained glass depiction of the Ascension** of Christ. With Christ are Saint Peter (right), Saint John (left) and St James (behind) and 8 other apostles in the side windows. It was created by leading glass artist J Redecki and unveiled in 1950 in memory of Arthur and Mira Reynolds.



The striking painting **“Supper at Emmaus”** illustrates a story found at the end of St Luke’s Gospel. The Risen Christ late on Easter afternoon appears to two of his disciples who recognise him in “the breaking of the bread” (the Holy Communion). The painting, executed by Alan Oldfield, was an entry in the 1981 Blake Prize for Religious Art, and was purchased and given to St Peter’s in 1982 as part of the legacy of William Helmore.

It contains much symbolism: the glowing light to the left, representing the Divine Presence; the desert landscape seen through the window speaks of Christ’s pilgrimage; which is symbolised by the shell; the carpet symbolises the grace; the apple reminds of the fall; the rosemary symbolises remembrance; the red colour has rich associations with blood, fire, suffering, martyrdom and triumph; the blue symbolises eternity; the straw reminds of Bethlehem.



## ***THE SANCTUARY***

The sanctuary of a church is often taken to symbolise heaven. It certainly is the focus of worship, and we believe the beauty of the St Peter's sanctuary is such as to encourage in worshippers a deeper sense of prayer, of wonder and adoration.

**The altar** was originally set against the east wall. During 1979-1980 the sanctuary area was enlarged. This meant the abandonment of the chancel with its choir stalls, the re-positioning of the altar rails and the creation of a new free-standing altar enabling the priest to stand behind it facing the congregation for the celebration of the Eucharist.



**The sanctuary lamp** is a rare design having a corona of candles and another corona (crown) at the top. The red light burning day and night symbolises God's perpetual presence with his people through the Holy Spirit. The candles when lit may remind us of the angels and saints in heaven standing around the throne of God.



**The rose window** in the east wall, now used as St Peter's "logo", was given by St Peter's first rector, Fr James Chaseling as a memorial to his mother-in-law Sarah Fullerton. The seven pointed star represents the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. The surrounding text reads: In memory of Sarah Fullerton Obit Dec 2<sup>nd</sup> 1908 Aetat 79 years. Her children rise up and called her blessed\*".

(\*from Proverbs 31, verse 28)



Below the rose window and set into the panelled wood are **six paintings** which form a polyptych. Painted by Anne Ferguson they were installed in 1992. The Queensland maple panelled wall of the sanctuary, was a gift from the Mosman Uniting Church Parish, having previously been part of the Mosman Methodist Church in Myahgah Road.



The artist explains: “The six paintings are meant to be read almost as a story, from left to right, but should also be open to all and any interpretations. The literal interpretation starts in the first (left) panel with sunrise over very European mountains, in the second with the faint figure of Mary, the Christ child in her arms, surrounded by doves. At the base of these panels are lilies. The third and fourth panels, set in much more Middle Eastern architectural frame, are an abstract depiction of the Transfiguration, with four figures turning away from the Light.. The fifth and sixth panels are set in an Australian landscape, later in the day, with the Crucifixion far away, echoed by a storm at sea”.

The **four windows** surrounding it show from left to right: The apostle St Peter, the Archangels St Michael and St Gabriel and, St Paul. The windows were created by glass artist J Redeki and were dedicated in 1923 in memory of Lt Gordon Alford (d.1916), Constance Blackmore (d.1919), anon, and Joseph and Jane Reynolds, respectively.



On the north wall of the sanctuary there are three **paintings** by Reinis Zusters (1990): “Angel’s Song” (the Annunciation), “Mary and Child” (Christ’s Nativity); “Three Wise Men” (the Epiphany).



**The brass lectern**, from which the Scriptures are read, is the same in design as that placed in the Chapel Royal at Windsor Castle by Queen Victoria in memory of Prince Albert. It and the wooden pulpit reversed positions when the sanctuary was remodelled in 1980, but were later restored to original positions in 2011.



High on the arch above the sanctuary there is another Blake Religious Prize entry, a sculpture by Norman Little, entitled **“Peter’s Denials : The Cock Doth Crow”**. It speaks of St Peter’s shattering experiences during Christ’s trials and crucifixion when the third crowing of the cock before dawn brought home to Peter not only his three-fold denial of his beloved leader but all that these denials implied.



The contorted figure expresses both the harsh trumpeting of the cock and the agony of Jesus in his passion. Yet it is gold, expressing the glory of the triumph of Jesus, the Christ of God, on the cross. Peter seems stunned, yet the figure is silver, reminding us that he still had worth in God’s sight, as do all people.

## CHURCH EXTERIOR

Leaving the church by the west door and then turning left you will find the Columbarium, and Memorial Garden, which was established in 1982. The **bird bath** was sculpted by Anne Ferguson. Captured as a reflection is the fine tower of the church.



At the east end of the church, outside the sanctuary, there is a fine example of contemporary religious art also fashioned by Anne Ferguson. Cast in phosphor bronze, it is in the form of a **pair of gates** open in welcome. The bars of the gates are spears which turn into sickles. Within the sculpture will be found rays of the sun, ripples on a pool, shoals of fish, clouds bringing life-giving rain, the broken bread of the Eucharist, Alpha and Omega, hands of intercession and offering, Australian

flora, and much more. The sculpture is worth seeing by day and also by night, when the flood lighting creates shadows which are themselves part of the total art work.



Come, Lord, work upon us,  
set us on fire and clasp us close,  
be fragrant to us, draw us to your  
loveliness,  
let us love, let us run to you.

(Prayer of Saint Augustine)

March 2013