

The Olive Branch

Association of Friends of the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf



Summer 2019

AROUND THE DIOCESE



Friends meeting at Launde Abbey - May



Archdeacon Christopher and Revd Anne



New Dean in Bahrain - June



Christians Aware Group visit a Mosque



Palm Sunday Procession in Baghdad - April



Gathering of the Provincial Secretaries

From the Chair, Canon Ian Calder:

Dear Friends,

Since the last “Olive Branch” we have had the Diocesan Synod in Larnaca, a talk from Bishop Michael in Cheltenham and our annual three days at Launde Abbey in May. The Synod was, as usual, an interesting four days with a variety of news and reports from around the diocese, some good and some not so good.

It always good to catch up with old friends and also make new ones, on such occasions. Archbishop Barry Morgan, retired Archbishop of Wales, was an excellent speaker giving us all some valuable spiritual insights and thoughts and helping the Synod to focus on things above as well as the nitty gritty below. We also saw the diocesan video “Rooted and Grounded” which I commend to you and can be found following the link <https://cypgulf.org/news/diocesan-video-2019-rooted-and-grounded/>

In the Middle of May we had another excellent few days at Launde Abbey. Not only were we kept up to date on developments in the diocese, we were also treated to another fascinating bible study from Bishop Michael, and all in the context of worship and good food, not forgetting the fine weather with which we were blessed.

It was good to be with people who have a real interest in the diocese as well as a good understanding of what the diocese is about.



Friends gather for fellowship and chatter



Another view of fun at the Abbey

It is a wonderful few days together and I strongly encourage you to put the dates in your diary and come along if you possibly can.



Friends dinner at Launde Abbey



Launde Abbey is a blessed retreat

Alongside all this I have been attending meetings of the Foundation of the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf who are

looking at how to do some serious fundraising for the diocese. I attended an interesting day course on the subject and hope that something further may develop from these initiatives. It has been good to have closer links with the Foundation and maybe one day we can combine with the common purpose of supporting the diocese and supporting each other.

Have a good summer and may the Lord lead us into all good things.

Ian Calder - 25th May 2019

Date for your diary in 2020

The date for 2020 at Launde Abbey is Friday 1st – Sunday 3rd May 2020.

Bishop Michael speaks at the Christian Arts Festival

Canon Ian and Penny went to hear Bishop Michael's talk "No Abiding City" on 8th May 2019 as part of the Christian Arts Festival in Cheltenham. John and Jenny Worton-Griffiths had set up the meeting and a good number attended.

Here follows a summary of this bishop's address based on a report from John and Jenny.



Bishop Michael delivers his talk

Bishop Michael's title, taken from Hebrews 13, was *No Abiding City: surprising stories of Christian presence and encounter in the Middle East*. A good audience had been drawn to Christ

Church Cheltenham on 8 May and the talk was part of the Christian Arts Festival. A recent report by the Bishop of Truro on the plight of some Christians in parts of the world such as the Middle East had been topical and caught people's interest. Would Bishop Michael be telling the same story?

Jenny and John Worton-Griffiths attend St Andrew's church in Kyrenia in Northern Cyprus, one of the churches of the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf. On behalf of the festival's trustees they had invited Bishop Michael - now also primate-designate of the Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East - to speak about the region. He was introduced by the Revd Nick Davies of St Philip & St James Leckhampton.



St Andrew's Church, Kyrenia

He began by exploring the geography of the Levant or Near East, together with the overlapping term Middle East. He ranged beyond them into Egypt, North Africa, and the Horn of Africa. Within these lands he outlined two apparently very different narrative of Christianity and Christians.

The first narrative told the story of those countries in the region where either it is difficult to worship or numbers of Christians have greatly diminished. In certain places they are definitely persecuted; in others their position is weak. Yet in these lands Christianity was present from the earliest days, prior to the existence of Islam; and even now the two great faiths have a continuous history

there of living in and acknowledging each other's indigenous presence. Such countries are Iran, Syria, Palestine, Iraq, Jordan, Egypt, and more besides.

The second narrative of the region was one of Christians in large numbers - but almost never citizens of the lands they currently live in. They are migrant expatriate workers and their dependents, both rich and poor and middling, from South Asia, the Far East, and Africa and well as Europe, the Americas, and Australasia. In some nations of the Middle East, settled but non-citizen migrants outnumber locals by 6 to 1 and more. The Christians among them, of many traditions but including exceptional numbers of Roman Catholics and Pentecostals, have built churches, and the churches have multiplied and expanded, albeit under supervision and with tight regulation and varying degrees of tolerance. Over any weekend of the year, for instance, just at one or other of the Anglican church compounds in countries like the United Arab Emirates and Qatar, ten or twenty thousand believers will pass through the gates - most of them not themselves Anglicans but hosted by Anglican parishes for the price of a usage fee that allows such compounds to be built, maintained, developed, and replicated.

Focusing in on his own Anglican diocese, which covers about ten political jurisdictions, Bishop Michael mentioned in particular the eye clinic at Christ Church Aden in the Yemen. It has been continuously supported and invested in throughout the civil war and is important in the eyes of the people of the Yemen. It employs local Muslim doctors and other staff who are committed to its work.

He also highlighted St George's church in Baghdad, where he and his wife Julia have spent Holy Week and Easter for the past several years. Under the leadership of Faiz Jerjes, an Iraqi priest ordained by him, the church oversees on its premises

a clinic, a kindergarten, a new and growing primary school, and more. Iraqi parents, Shia and Sunni Muslim as well as Christian, are particularly pleased to send their children to the unapologetically Christian school.

Having described Christian presence and encounter in the region - not just his own diocese - through the tale of two narratives, not competing but complementary, the bishop finished his address with a Questions and Answers session and finally was thanked for taking part in the festival by the Bishop of Gloucester, the Right Reverend Rachel Treweek.



Bishop Rachel thanks Bishop Michael

Editor's Note: Thank you to John and Jenny W-G for providing this summary.

Bishop Michael's Synod 2019 address

When I was rector of the church of St Martin with St Peter Worcester the choir emerged from the bowels of the earth. The bowels of the earth were officially the Lower Choir Vestry. It was a large choir of young and old, female and male, and they snaked up a twisting stone staircase. Then, coiled around the newel of the stair, they stopped just before emerging into the north aisle and the first hymn, and we – choir, servers, and clergy – prayed a prayer that you may know: “Grant O Lord that what we sing with our

lips we may believe in our hearts, and what we believe in our hearts we may show forth in our lives”.

Sing or say, it doesn't matter: what that prayer asks God to give us Christians is authentic integration. Worship, belief, and daily living must be one whole practice, one whole offering, one whole identity. Each must feed the others, each must inform the others, each must raise the others' game. When at the end of the Eucharist each week or day we go in peace to love and serve the Lord, we're taking where we've been into where we're going, and what we've been in into what we're getting into.

Therefore as this synod unfolds, as worship, and reflection on worship, interplay with business, discussion, planning, and fellowship, I look forward to our seeing where liturgy, the Service of the People of God, comes from and where it goes.

“Where” is quite a word. Place, linked with identity, has seemed increasingly to preoccupy people all over the world, often to the point of anxiety and indignation, either real because felt in the guts or confected for party-political or group advantage. It's not long since a certain leader decried the notion of being *citizens of nowhere*, and as a Christian I agree; except that she, also a Christian, contrasted it with being citizens of *somewhere*, meaning her country, whereas I'd want to say that as human beings we're present and valid *wherever* we are and *kin* with people *everywhere*, and that as sons and daughters of God our true native land is *heaven*.

Christianity is material and place-specific. The incarnation began in a womb in Nazareth, came to light in a cave in Bethlehem, was spelled out in love in the villages of Galilee, and was revealed in awful glory in the city of Jerusalem. The Church isn't a philosophical theory or system; it's people, in places. But people

are God's people and places are places God created, and they are not to be made idols. None suffices, but only God. God forbid that the horrors and idiocies of the nationalisms of the 1930s, over-assertive because over-fearful, with their narrowed definition of who is in and who should be out and their selective veneration of selective history and their predilection for mythology and selected heroes present and past, should live again in a new age. But in more than one society and nation they already do, and more than one society and nation is being tempted and led to think and feel in the same way.

The Church is called to be a beacon lighting another Way. Place and nation and group are transformed if they are understood as evidences of God's rich creativity and our God-given ability to respond by flourishing multilaterally, differently but not in hostile competition, each using varied talents and discovering complementary tasks. In such an understanding, proper pride in what's specific is legitimate and good.

That's a sermon for the world but it won't be credible if we're not hearing it for ourselves. How complementary and mutually encouraging are we, really, in our congregations and councils, in our diocese, and in our Province? Are we ever over-assertive because, secretly, over-fearful? Do we have a private list of who's in and who should be out? Do we on occasion or routinely misuse our history and settle for our mythology? All of us must answer for ourselves, but whatever the answer the only way for Christians is Christ's way. He was born, lived, and died for all, not some. He constantly crossed boundaries of nation, race, caste, gender, class, and power in the name of the nature of God, which is tender mercy spelled out in love.

For Christians disagreement is only crippling when it is not engaged with and worked on in patient courtesy. The comprehensive history and prehistory of

this diocese that Canon Angela Murray is close to completing shows that from earliest days what is now Cyprus and the Gulf has had its fair share of problems and of disputes. It also shows that economic upturns and downturns have been the constant fluctuating background to Anglican presence in the region, alongside repeated wars and rumours of wars, and frequent demographic change. But problems have been best addressed and disputes have been most fruitfully resolved when exchanges have been thoughtful, properly researched, and measured, the broadest overview has been remembered, and our common purpose, standing, and privilege in an Episcopal Church in this region has been acknowledged. Our interconnectedness is a gift, across the diocese and beyond as well as between and within parishes. The coarseness and aggression of much debate and correspondence in contemporary life is deplorable but is certainly improper for *us* if we're to walk the Way of Christ.

Happily so much of our diocesan life, which I see and am part of both at a geographical distance and at first hand, is far from that coarseness and close to Christ. Worship is regularly offered with devotion and imagination. The good news of God in Christ is proclaimed in deeds and well as words. In more than one place the hungry are most certainly fed and the humble are genuinely lifted high. The sick and lonely and imprisoned and dying and bereaved are visited and prayed with. Disciples are made of the people of many nations in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Those who had not so far known us, or wrongly thought they knew us too well, are given a chance to see us doing what we authentically do. A hand of shared humanity is held out and often gratefully grasped.

One temptation in church life is to take things for granted. Faithful participation in things both spiritual and temporal by

great numbers of lay people; the hidden as well as the visible service of clergy, Readers, and others; liturgy itself; and the steady development of discipleship, vocation, and ministry. I don't take any of it for granted, and I therefore unreservedly congratulate and, in the name of the diocese as a whole, thank you here at synod and thousands back in the parishes and chaplaincies as well as supporters and friends across the world for all you are and do.

I also take this opportunity to do one piece of integrated thanking and announcing that I deliberately did not do earlier. You have known that Archdeacon John Holdsworth is to retire this year. I can now confirm that he will serve until the end of July, but in the same breath I must gladly remind you, as you know I know he knows I will, that he is fully in post till then, firing on every cylinder available to him. When I say *post* I mean of course *posts*: he is parish priest of St Helena Larnaca, territorial archdeacon of this island, executive archdeacon across the whole diocese, and Director of Ministry. This therefore is not a farewell, yet, but a signal, and a moment for our warmest thanks.

Let me integrate with that the announcement of his successor in the roles of Archdeacon in Cyprus and chaplain and parish priest of Larnaca: none other than someone you already know well, the Venerable Christopher Fitcher, currently Archdeacon of Exeter and among the Exeter representation here this week. So deepest thanks to John can be, I trust, mingled with most heartfelt congratulations to Christopher, who will arrive during the summer and be licensed in early September.

Archdeacon John has done so much to advance the development of vocation, ministry, and training in the diocese, in particular connecting with theological institutions to secure the best possible formation and training for those in whom

we discern a call to public ministry, that I have decided to retain his services as honorary – that is, unstipended - Director of Ministry for a short but crucial transition period of two years during which he will liaise with Archdeacon Christopher in key ministry matters.

Of course Christopher won't arrive alone, and I have pleasure in also announcing that I shall also license the Reverend Anne Fitcher as non-stipendiary assistant priest at St Helena Larnaca. Anne is currently assistant priest of Colyton, Musbury, Southleigh, and Branscombe in east Devon. Before ordination she had a distinguished career at a senior level in social services. In the light of that I am also asking her to be Cyprus archdeaconry social concern coordinator, taking forward the fine contribution made till now in that area by the Reverend Christine Goldsmith.

A wise Church blends things old and new. In all aspects of our diocesan life and in this synod, I want us not restlessly to innovate for the sake of sheer difference but imaginatively to discover what God has already given us as well as what he freshly offers.

+Michael Cyprus & the Gulf

January 2019

News from St Christopher's, Bahrain:

Confirmations and Licensing

Bishop Michael was in Bahrain for a very special celebration at St Christopher's Cathedral on Friday 18th January 2019: the Confirmation of ten candidates – six adults and four young people from several nationalities and backgrounds– and the Admission and Licensing of Dr Angel Afolabi as a Reader on the day that she herself was confirmed.



All smiles from the confirmees

Angel grew up within the Southern Baptist Church in the United States, but since she began teaching in the Gulf, first in Fujairah and then Bahrain, she has found her home within the Anglican Church family and has increasingly felt at home within Anglican worship.

She discovered that the Anglican Church was the community that reflected the breadth of nationalities that make up the expatriate communities in the Gulf in a way that other churches did not.

For the past three years she has been following the *Exploring Faith* course and attended a Bishop's Advisory Panel Conference in Ras Al Khaimah in October 2018 following which the Bishop accepted her as a Reader in training.



Licensing of Dr Angel

The service was followed with a wonderful buffet meal at the BAPCO Club which seventy of the congregation attended.



A celebratory meal with the confirmees

St. Christopher’s Cathedral says farewell to Dean and Mrs Butt

On the 11th April 2019 at the Bahrain Petroleum Company (Bapco) Club a farewell celebration dinner and concert were held for Chris and Tricia. There may not have been a choir of angels but the voices were full of emotion, good vibrations and expressions of gratitude at the farewell concert staged for one of the Kingdom’s most loved and respected expat couples who will be shortly leaving the island.



Chris Butt speaks at the dinner



The Kenyan community led the dancing

Bahrain: A new dean is welcomed

In the early evening of Saturday 1 June another joyful milestone was celebrated when the Very Reverend and Venerable Dr William Edward Schwartz OBE was instituted by Bishop Michael Lewis as Anglican Chaplain and Parish Priest of Bahrain, and installed by the Reverend Canon Stephen Thanapaul as Dean of St Christopher’s Cathedral.



The bus company provided a bus from the Cathedral to the BAPCO Club



Farewell to Chris and Tricia Butt



St Christopher's before the service

The service was attended by more than 120 people: members of all five Anglican

congregations who worship at the cathedral and Awali church, including children and young adults; Julia Lewis, with Carol Nicholson visiting from Doha; clergy from other churches in Bahrain; guests from Bahrain’s diplomatic corps and local charities; and priests from four other parishes in the diocese who were able to travel to Bahrain for the occasion.



Julia Lewis and Carol Nicholson

Bill continues in his role as Archdeacon in the Gulf and will carry on being known widely as Archdeacon Bill as well as Dean of Bahrain.



Bill reads the Declaration of Assent



The service continues



Group photograph following the service



The celebratory cake

Bill and Edie were officially welcomed at the following dinner reception in the Alun Morris Hall on the cathedral compound, during which they cut a celebratory cake.

News from Aden – Healing.

The eye clinic in Aden has taken delivery of a new piece of equipment that will greatly improve their treatment of glaucoma and cataracts. The purchase was made possible by generous donations from several quarters, including the Jerusalem and the Middle East Church Association (JMECA) and the Episcopal Development & Relief Fund.



Medical apparatus for the Eye Clinic

Archdeacon Bill Schwartz described it as “great evidence of God intervening to achieve wondrous things.”

However, it remains impossible for non-Yemenis to live in Aden without military

cover—even NGOs are not operating there except in military confinement. Yet the clinic’s work continues and new arrangements with UNHCR governing refugees have enabled it to extend care to a second camp. And morale is high. “The staff are very conscious that people are praying for them,” Archdeacon Bill said.

News from Iraq

Palm Sunday at St George’s



Congregation gather with palm crosses

Hundreds processed around and into the church of St George Baghdad on Palm Sunday to start the liturgies of Holy Week. Children and then adults of all ages followed the cross, servers, Fr Faiz, and Bishop Michael, carrying palms and olive-branches as they sang the story of Christ’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Inside, the great narrative of the Passion of Our Lord according to St Luke was proclaimed in dramatic form by three readers.



The children in procession

Bishop Michael preached on true revolution, and almost everyone received the blessed sacrament of Holy Communion



The Palm procession

Maundy Thursday at St George’s

Twelve young people, girls and boys, had their feet washed by Bishop Michael in the liturgy at St George Baghdad.



+Michael and Fr Faiz wash the children’s feet



+Michael leads the worship

After communion the altar was stripped and clothed in black as Psalms 22 and 51 were read. Finally the lights were extinguished and the great cross was set up ready for the prayers of the people.

Good Friday at St George's



The cross lies on the Altar

The congregation at St George Baghdad kept Good Friday with great devotion. After hearing the Passion according to St John and the Solemn Intercessions, all venerated the cross set up in the sanctuary by kneeling or bowing before it.



A young person kisses the cross



+Michael and others bow at the cross



Others pray at the cross

Approaching, they had sipped a drink made specially to commemorate the vinegar offered to Christ

Baghdad - Holy Saturday Vigil and First Paschal Mass

As Holy Saturday drew towards a close the people of St George Baghdad assembled at the west end of the church for the kindling of New Fire and the blessing and lighting of the Paschal Candle. Fr Faiz Jerjes, parish priest, carried the lit candle through the door and up to the sanctuary, proclaiming three times in Arabic "The light of Christ", to which all responded "Thanks be to God", and Bishop Michael sang in English the centuries-old Exsultet, the Easter hymn of praise to Christ the light of the world. Multiple scripture passages about deliverance were read. At last the people burst out in the first Alleluias of the season to welcome the Resurrection Gospel according to St Luke.



The Paschal Candle is prepared

After communion clergy and servers left in procession accompanied by the heartfelt ululations of the women of the congregation.



Taking communion t the Paschal Service



+Michael blesses a child

Easter Day in Baghdad



Easter Sunday communion

The Great Three Days culminated in the final Paschal Eucharist on Sunday. The people of St George Baghdad were joined by ten staff from the British embassy, and the resurrection of Christ was celebrated with much singing and plenty of incense.



+Michael delivers the Easter message



Many people attended the service

Alleluia, Christ is risen. He is risen indeed, alleluia. *Al Masiah qam. Qam, qam, qam.*

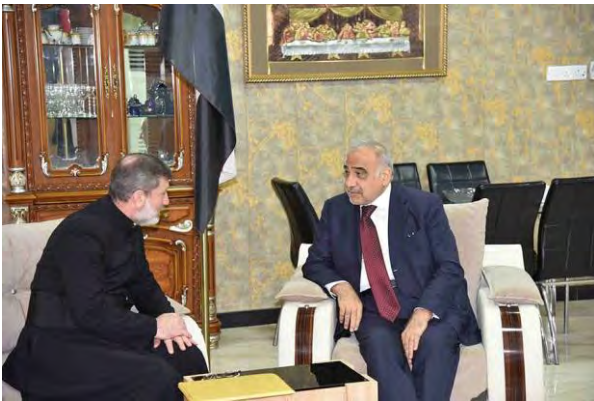
Baghdad school: one more floor

The School of the Redeemer – Al Fadi – at St George Baghdad has inaugurated its third floor. The assembly hall and stage were used for the first time when Fr Faiz and the teachers led end-of-school-year festivities



The school children entertain

Iraq's Prime Minister visits St George's



Fr Faiz talks with the Prime Minister

His Excellency Adil Abdul-Mahdi, Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq, visited St George Baghdad on Wednesday 30 January. He was warmly welcomed by Fr Faiz Jerjes, the parish priest, who gave him an account of Anglican presence in Iraq and how it works to support social initiatives, reconcile religions, and confront hate speech.

Then he toured the whole compound including church, school, clinic, resource centre, and more, thanking Fr Faiz and his staff for all they do for the nation.



Prime Minister viewing the church



Meeting with the school children

Baghdad stands fast with Yezidis

The second Yezidi Conference hosted by St George Baghdad culminated on 8 June 2019, with a meeting that included Mr Mohammed Al Timimi (President of Iraq's Directorate of NGOs) and Dr Ahmad Kataw (head of the National Diversity Organization), along with ambassadors and other embassy representatives.

As well as raising awareness of the plight of the Yezidis, the week-long event focused on providing free medical treatment to a group of Yezidi women hosted by St George's, in cooperation with St Raphael Hospital. The Conference heard that many Yezidi women struggled to access medical services, in some cases several years after their liberation from ISIS-held areas. Dr Mariam, representative of St Raphael, was recognised for her work in providing healthcare to the Yezidis. Parish priest Fr Faiz Jerjes also thanked Mr Al Timimi for ensuring that issues highlighted at the Conference were shared with the office of the Prime Minister.



Mr al Tamini receives an award



Mrs Ban Atheer addresses the conference



Mr Sinan Kakarash receives an award

Other speakers included Conference coordinator and head of Rozza Shingal Yezidis, Mrs Resala, and Mrs Ban Atheer of St George School of the Redeemer – Al Fadi.

Kuwait: the Spirit moves

Friday of Pentecost weekend in Kuwait saw multiple Spirit-filled celebrations. In the morning liturgy at St Paul Ahmadi, Bishop Michael confirmed five candidates, welcomed five additional eucharistic assistants, and inaugurated a new branch of the Mothers' Union.



Five confirmation candidates

Mrs Gladys Chali, wife of the Zimbabwean ambassador, helped Mama Christine Mbona with the admission ceremony for the branch's multinational members. It is only the second in the diocese, joining St George Baghdad.



Kuwait Mothers' Union

Ten further confirmations followed later in the day during Urdu-language worship in Kuwait City.

Abu Dhabi Lenten Confirmations - March

Nineteen candidates from St Andrew Abu Dhabi and St Thomas Al 'Ain were confirmed by Bishop Michael on 22nd March at St Andrew's.



Lenten Candidates

Cyprus - New archdeacon announced, and new Social Concern Co-ordinator - February

The next Archdeacon in Cyprus and parish priest of St Helena Larnaca will be the Venerable Christopher Futcher. Known to many already from his visits to diocesan synod over the last few years, Christopher has been Archdeacon of Exeter in our link diocese in England.



Archdeacon Christopher and Revd Anne

Anne Fitcher is also a priest, having served until recently in the small Devon town of Colyton. She will be non-stipendiary assistant priest at St Helena's and archdeaconry Social Concern Co-ordinator, following in the footsteps of the Revd Christine Goldsmith who pioneered the coordination of work with refugees and migrants on the island.

Archdeacon Christopher is well-known to the diocese, having been a regular visitor to Synod in recent years as a guest speaker and as a representative of Exeter Diocese, with which Cyprus and the Gulf enjoys a formal twinning link. Anne has also spent time in the diocese, having undertaken a placement in Bahrain as part of her curacy training. She was ordained in 2015.

Announcing the changes, Bishop Michael also revealed that Archdeacon John would remain as Director of Ministry, on an honorary basis, for the next two years as he has done so much to advance the development of vocation, ministry and training in the diocese, in particular connecting with theological institutions to secure the best possible formation for those in whom we discern a call to public ministry. John's experience is still needed in this important role.

Cyprus - A Matter of Degrees

Diocesan Director of Ministry, Archdeacon John Holdsworth was

invested with an honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity at a Graduation ceremony of Queens College Newfoundland on April 30th. Around four hundred people had braved the 1 degree temperatures to be present at the ceremony at the cathedral-like church of St Mary in the Island capital, St John's. Queens, an affiliate College of Memorial University Newfoundland, is an Anglican foundation and a partner in the Diocesan Ministry project, accrediting and hosting the Exploring Faith course on which thirty-three of our students are enrolled currently.

The citation for the degree was read by Rt Revd John Organ, Bishop of Western Newfoundland, and former chaplain to Archbishop Suheil in Jerusalem. The annual College Report was part of the proceedings and was delivered by the Provost, Dr Rick Singleton, who spoke warmly about the link with the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf. An Address was given by the Primate of Canada, Most Rev'd Fred Hiltz who also made positive reference to the link.



Archdeacon John accepts his degree

Earlier in the day Archdeacon John had spoken to a gathering of around seventy people associated with the College, clerical and lay. He said that whilst he was delighted and honoured by the award personally, he considered it primarily to be a recognition, affirmation and celebration of the relationship between the College and the Diocese



Queens College Newfoundland

Nicosia - Epiphany Confirmations

Eight candidates of widely varying backgrounds were confirmed on the Feast of the Epiphany at St Paul's Cathedral, Nicosia.



Confirmations at St Paul, Nicosia

Provincial Secretaries go East



In order to share perspectives, expertise, and wisdom, the Provincial Secretaries of most of the forty constituent Churches that make up the worldwide Anglican Communion convened early in May in Hong Kong. Their gathering overlapped

with the meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council, the only one of the Four Instruments of Communion (the other Instruments are the Archbishop of Canterbury himself, the Lambeth Conference of Bishops, and the Primates Meeting) that includes laity and other clergy as well as bishops.



Gathering of the Provincial Secretaries

Seen here with Archbishop Justin Welby are a selection of the Secretaries, including, *far left*, our own Georgia Katsantonis, who in addition to her day job in Nicosia as Bishop Michael's PA also oversees administration and liaison within our own Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East, in which Cyprus and the Gulf since 1976 has proudly taken its place alongside the Dioceses of Iran, Egypt, and Jerusalem: surely the most variegated of all Anglican Provinces.

Cyprus Social Outreach Forum meets in Nicosia - April



Outreach Forum Meeting

Local and international NGOs, the UNHCR, and representatives from the Anglican parishes on the island of Cyprus came together on the 4th April at the Home of Cooperation in Nicosia for the Social Outreach Forum organised by the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf.

Three major challenges that are facing people from and in Cyprus were discussed: Human trafficking and sexual exploitation; healthcare provision; and refugees. Part of the narrative that emerged from among the organisations was a sense that things are becoming more challenging, particularly with a 70% increase in asylum applications on the island from 2017 to 2018 and increasing rates of homelessness amongst refugees, according to UNHCR, with hardening negative opinions towards refugees and victims of Human Trafficking.

Some NGOs expressed a sense of compassion fatigue, due to the challenges they face in attempting to change opinions and ensure conditions of dignity for those they work alongside.



A small-group meeting

In mixed small groups participants discussed what they had heard: how the church is already responding, and looking to how it can be more strategic in how it looks to respond to human need with loving service. Participants answered questions that Joel Kelling, regional facilitator for the Anglican Alliance, had posed to both the parishes and the NGOs. Ways of helping to overcome prejudice and fear were explored, not only through education, but via sharing

time and experiences, walking side-by-side with marginalised peoples, and perceiving each other's common humanity, made in the image and likeness of God.

Hatice Jenkins from Yaslı Hakları ve Ruh Sağlığı Derneği – the Association for Elderly Rights and Mental Health, whilst discussing attitudes towards and support for those suffering with mental health diseases, said that “all they need is love and care” – but that both of these forms of compassion were lacking institutionally and communally.

The Archidiaconal Social Outreach Officer (designate), the Revd Anne Fatcher summarised the conversations and sought to develop a closer relationship between all the parishes and those organisations who would appreciate greater cooperation and support. She outlined three qualities that are essential to working alongside the vulnerable people we find in our midst – solidarity, hope, and dignity.

In closing remarks Bishop Michael Lewis was keen to invite other organisations and churches into collaboration with the Anglican church and NGOs to strengthen the overall response to vulnerable and hurting people, be they locals, migrants by choice or through displacement, coerced or trafficked.



Group presentation and discussion

Cyprus - No Borders, and no end to talent

The Diocese is proud to announce that Anetta Stylianou has been invited to exhibit at the 8th Beijing International Biennale, to be held on 26th August to 23rd September 2019.



Anetta's exhibit

A well-established artist known in Cyprus for her portraits and landscapes, her piece in oils is entitled No Borders—a vibrant depiction of street musicians.

This is Anetta's eighth appearance at a major international exhibition, including three Beijing Biennales and the Biennale Internazionale Dell'Arte Contemporanea in Florence. Recently retired as Diocesan Administrative Secretary, Anetta continues to serve as Secretary of the Jerusalem and the East Mission Trust (JEMT).

News from our Link Diocese - Thika still growing

As our sister diocese of Thika (Kenya) approaches its twentieth anniversary, Archdeacon Patrick Mukuna reported a catalogue of successes over the past year: Here follows the statistics:

Three new church plants; there are now 189 congregations; six new consecrations; two new parishes created, bringing the total to 78;

2164 confirmations; three new Readers—they now have 258; 622 new Mothers'

Union members; St Augustine Training Institute established;

Five new Deacons ordained, bringing the number of clergy in the diocese to 103.

Christians Aware Group Visit Bahrain - Good news is worth telling

'Good news worth telling' was the headline of a two-page spread in Gulf Weekly (November 28 – December 4 2018) about a visit to Bahrain by a group from Christians Aware. Dean Chris Butt put together an excellent varied programme, illustrating the breadth of Christian ministry in the Gulf.

Susan Cooper, a member of the group writes: We met the Friday and Sunday congregations in the cathedral. Friday, of course, being the main day of worship in Bahrain. The weekend was enhanced by the coincidental visit of the Rev'd Anne Fatcher, who was returning to visit the people she had served amongst during a placement in the previous spring. This time with her husband, Christopher, the Archdeacon of Exeter, who was on his first visit to the Gulf. This provided an added reason for the community lunch on Friday at the Bahrain Petroleum Company Club in Awali. This was a very fine buffet lunch, the price very modest, but Chris Butt was checking with congregation members as to whether any required a subsidy – this brought home to me the wide disparity of incomes of expatriates in the Gulf. At the end of the lunch Christopher Fatcher, talked about the diocesan links with Exeter and Thika and I spoke for a few minutes about Christians Aware.

On Friday evening, we attended the Tamil speaking Eucharist in the Cathedral. This was the only service at which there was live music. We were grateful to Father Stephen for translating his sermon as he went along. A number of men on their own indicated the reality for many: they

are working on single person contracts a long way from family and friends. Those to whom I spoke came from South India, one was single but the other had left behind a wife and son.

The Sunday morning Eucharist has a smaller congregation, but it is important for those who work shifts. Filipina women, who attend regularly, work in hotels where it is impossible to get time off at the weekend. But on Sundays they can either take the day off or be put on a late shift.

The Sunday evening Eucharist occurs after work and appeals to those who enjoy a lie-in on their day off. This week it was followed by Living-Room Dialogues in the Deanery. We enjoyed a 'bring and share' supper then were treated to a talk on sustainable energy. Basic information was given; including about the different types of light bulbs. Expats, on the whole, live in rented accommodation so the range of energy-saving measures that are available to owner occupiers are not available to many in Gulf countries. Another suggestion was that 24° was cool enough for air conditioning systems. When I changed the temperature setting of the air conditioning unit in the Bishop's flat from 23° to 24°, I no longer needed to wear a cardigan.



A visit to a Mosque

We saw glimpses of the wider society in Bahrain. We visited the attractive Al-Fateh Mosque where an excellent guide showed us round and explained the main

points of Islamic worship and faith, she was also keen to discuss similarities and differences between our two faiths. It did not surprise me that she had been the guide who had shown the Prince of Wales around a couple of years before.

A drive around the island allowed us to spot the first oil well, which produced oil from 1932, as well as a number of prehistoric burial mounds of the Dilmun civilization. We drove round a Shi'a area, where social housing was being built. The house sizes looked quite substantial to me. There is a disparity in wealth between the Sunni and the Shi'a population. We made a brief visit to a camel farm. A visit the Craft Centre around the corner from the Cathedral enabled us to meet Bahraini people working and displaying their wares.



A visit to a Craft Centre

The Carrefour supermarket where we shopped was mainly stocked to supply the needs of the local Indian community. Direct flights to Mumbai or Delhi take only three and a half hours, and just over four and a half hours to Chennai, a lot less than six and half hours to London.

The site of the Bahrain Fort has been occupied for about 5000 years and contains evidence of seven different civilisations from the Dilmun to the Portuguese. The Fort Museum is well laid out showing the various layers of excavation. There is an evening Son & Lumiere performance which summarises the history in half an hour. In addition, the Bahrain National Museum has

excellent displays showing the history of Bahrain. This was well worth a visit and very cheap to enter, although the café there was expensive.

The US Naval base covers a substantial area, with the UK Royal Navy base contained within it. Security was tight. We were shown round the base by a chaplain, Christina Mauntel who drove us around the base in a golf buggy. We had lunch in the Officers' Club and were joined by Mark Mander, RN chaplain, and talked over the challenges of young sailors being stationed in a new environment a long way from home and friends and families.

The Mission to Seafarers' Centre is in the merchant shopping port, so another security check was required. The centre is modern and well-equipped, but it is less used than it was. Some of this is due to an economic slowdown, also due to merchant ships having more access to Wi-Fi, which means the centre's computers and phones are less used than they were. The chaplain, the Canon Stephen Thanapaul, spends a lot of his time going out to visit crews on board their ships.

Our Sunday also included a visit to the British Embassy, strong security again, to meet Mockbul Ali, the Deputy British Ambassador. He gave a succinct view of the political and religious situation in Bahrain. He describes himself as Church of England Muslim – which I take to be a great compliment to the C of E ethos of being there for the community, rather than only for its congregation.

Food seemed to be very reasonably priced. Indian food in particular was very cheap, but so was the British Club, where we had a swim and lunch on Sunday. More expensive was a very busy Arabic restaurant where we were able to treat our hosts. We ate very well for just over £12 a head!



An Arabic meal to conclude the visit

The visit came to an end all too soon and we found ourselves sitting in the airport waiting for our overnight flight. Having left Bahrain with temperatures in the 20s, I was faced with scraping ice off my car before I could drive home!

It was an amazing experience thanks to Chris and Tricia Butt (especially as our visit coincided with Tricia having a procedure on her knee) and to Stephanie and Darshan Hansen-Singh who hosted half our group and helped a lot with transporting and showing us around.

Susan Cooper

Christians Aware is an inter-denominational charity offering opportunities for encounter to enable understanding and trust to grow between people of different cultures, denominations and faiths.

Bahrain - Cambridge Ordinand spends a month in Bahrain - March

As part of final year of training at Westcott House, Cambridge I was offered the chance by Bishop Michael to spend some time in the diocese, to experience Anglican ministry in a context outside of the Church of England, and then to speak of the diocese on my return to the UK.

My placement began as my wife Maria Vittoria and I travelled to Larnaca to observe the diocesan synod. This was my

first experience of diocesan administration and procedure - perhaps I should say my first glimpse of what awaits me in the coming years. We enjoyed meeting representatives from across the diocese and hearing their stories of ministry and the challenges they face in their chaplaincies, as well as joining in the worship which formed the backbone of the synod. Importantly the synod gave us an overview of the context in which we would spend the greater part of my placement in Bahrain. Although the diocese is perhaps unique in the way it has to balance the complex cultural and administrative boundaries which span its length and breadth, the common threads of Anglicanism helped me to see what a rich tapestry the Communion is.

We arrived in Bahrain with no previous experience of the Gulf, but we soon felt at home as we were welcomed by the different cathedral congregations. From preaching and helping to lead worship to visiting a labour camp and a shelter for migrant workers, the placement gave me an insight into the work of different Christian ministries in Bahrain. We were surprised by the freedom to worship generously afforded to Christians in Bahrain. Having taken communion to a man in hospital, I reflected that it was probably harder to do this in the UK than in Bahrain, such was the ease with which we were able to pray with him.



Dean Chris, Tom and Canon Stephen

The relationship between Christians and their Muslim neighbours is very important

in a country where the Church is being hosted.



Meeting with Shaikh Khalid

Meeting with Shaikh Khalid bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, who heads up the King Hamad Global Centre for Global Peaceful Co-existence, we learnt how the Bahraini government is keen to educate school children about respect for other religious groups in the hope of reducing inter-faith tensions. Much is said in the UK about religious tolerance, but the experience in Bahrain taught us that tolerance is a misnomer as it implies accepting that something is happening, but at a distance from you. Perhaps we should aim for religious friendship; genuine relationships of sharing and working together for a better and fairer society.

Perhaps the most challenging visit of my placement was to a labour camp with members of a Telugu house church supported by the Bible Society. Not knowing quite what to expect, I was certainly not prepared for the terrible conditions which I found there. When we arrived, I was shown to a dank store room which the camp's residents use as a make-shift chapel. I was embarrassed to be offered a chair while all the other men sat on the floor in front of me and, as I stood up to preach (somewhat unprepared) on Jesus calming the storm, I realised that when speaking of troubled waters in our lives, I had got very little in common with these men and I felt utterly ill-equipped. After the service, I was

moved to tears as they asked me to pray for their loved ones, whom they'd left back in India, and for their own health. Notwithstanding the terrible conditions in which these men lived, I was struck by the joy with which they spoke to me of their faith and of how they study the Bible in small groups in the evenings to encourage each other.



Men from the labour camp, members of the Telugu house church and Daniel John of the Bible Society

Over our month in Bahrain, we had the privilege of being welcomed into the lives and homes of so many members of the cathedral community. Thanks to this generosity we were able to attend a home group whose members, among the many laughs, made us rethink how we live out the Gospel in responding to human need. Other encounters, while no less special, were more fleeting, for example with the couples who got married at St. Christopher's during our stay. I remember one wedding in which we juggled three languages, highlighting how Anglican chaplaincies abroad have a unique role in the encounter between (often very) different cultures. After the service the bride's father plied us with a pre-lunch glass of Slovakian vodka in celebration - some gestures require no language translation!

Responding to human need is at the heart of Christian mission in Bahrain. Indeed, the first American missionaries in the country built a hospital before building a church. Reflecting on this during one of

the *Exploring Faith* sessions at the Cathedral, someone said, 'In a country where you can't talk about Christ, you have to *be* Christ'. 'When people recognise Christ in you, they begin to ask questions about your faith and then you can share the Gospel with them.' During our month there, we witnessed many Christians in Bahrain living by this maxim and we were inspired and privileged by their willingness to give of themselves to help their neighbours, regardless of their faith.



Tom with his wife Maria Vittoria

We owe a huge debt of gratitude to Chris and Tricia Butt (by now themselves back in the UK), who not only looked after us magnificently, but also gave us an example of ministry which is clearly widely respected in Bahrain and which we hope to copy as we prepare to move into curacy in Guildford. Finally, I am grateful to the USPG, the Cambridge Centre for Christianity Worldwide, the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf, the Diocese of Guildford, and Westcott House for the grants that made this placement possible.

Tom Pote

Support the Diocese

If you are reading this the chances are that you have been part, or are part, of a worshipping community in the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf. As a continuing member of such a community you will be supporting the diocese through your

chaplaincy's giving scheme. If you have moved on to pastures new, you may wish to give thanks for the spiritual and pastoral support that you have received from the diocese.

The Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf Foundation is a UK based charity set up to support the work of the diocese. Recently, it has received donations to support the building of the school in Baghdad and the Ras Morbat Clinic in Aden as well facilitating Gift Aid claims on donations to chaplaincies by UK taxpayers. It has also given the diocese £25K per annum to support training for ministry. In the past year, temporary loans have been made to the diocese to cover delays in remittance of monies from some territories.

Inevitably, in an international diocese covering many different jurisdictions, there are reasons why donations do not reach the diocese in a timely manner and the Foundation can help the diocese meet its substantial ongoing commitments.

Please consider leaving a legacy to the Foundation, or may be, a one off gift when you leave the diocese, or a regular continuing donation. If you are a UK tax payer, the Foundation can claim Gift Aid on your donations. For further information, see the diocesan website <http://cypgulf.org/donate/> or email: foundation.treasurer@cypgulf.org

Susan Cooper

A New Priest for All Hallows by the Tower

It was a great privilege for Penny and me, along with Charles and Sally Milner and James and Heather Brennan, to represent the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf at the Licensing of the Rev'd Katherine Hedderly as Priest in Charge at All Hallows by the Tower on 3rd April.



New Priest at All-Hallows by the Tower

We arrived in good time and I robed up for the occasion. The church was full and Katherine was well and truly licensed and installed by the Bishop of London, the Rt Revd and Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally, who also licensed Katherine as the Area Dean. The setting was Choral Evensong and the choir sang the responses and an anthem to great effect.

At the end of the service there were some excellent refreshments and a chance to meet a few people as well as giving a quick greeting to Katherine before we left to return home to Gloucester. All in all, a great occasion and I am sure the very close relationship we have with All Hallows will continue to grow and flourish under Katherine's leadership.

Ian Calder

Sad News



Geoffrey Adams



Geoffrey Adams

Geoffrey passed away in April. He had been unwell over the last few years, and his weak lungs had deteriorated in recent months. Geoffrey celebrated his 70th birthday, but by then he was in hospital being given palliative care for his lung infection. He passed away shortly after his 70th.

Geoffrey was lay reader in Jeddah from 2008 to 2013 and will be remembered as a caring, kind-hearted friend to many and a thoughtful, engaging speaker, and great professional photographer.

Editor's Note: Geoffrey was also an active member of the Friends Organisation and for a short time served on our committee.

Dates for your Diary 2019

The Friends AGM will be held at All Hallows-by-the-Tower on Monday 5th August 2019.

Friends Northern Gathering will take place in York on Wednesday 16th October 2019.

Friends South West Gathering in Exeter, the date and venue are yet to be confirmed.

Date for your Diary 2020

Synod 2020, which some members of the Friends usually attend, will take place in Abu Dhabi (the first time in the Gulf since 1999) from 3rd to 7th February.

The date for the Launde Abbey gathering has been fixed as Friday 1st May to Sunday 3rd May 2020.

Editor's Note: Bernice and I attended the Launde Abbey 900th Celebration weekend on 21st-24th June 2019.



Launde Abbey

It was a fantastic event, with celebration services, choral events, tours, walks and talks and a wonderland recital of St Mark's Gospel in two half-hour sessions.

I have to say that I have never seen so many Bishops in one place at once. What is the collective noun for Bishops? Google suggests a Bench or Psalter or a Sea of Bishops. I look forward to comments.

Watch out for a full report on the event in the next Olive Branch, which perhaps might inspire many more Friends to attend Launde Abbey next year and enjoy the beauty and tranquillity of this place.
