

★ ★ DIOCESE IN EUROPE ★ ★ European Anglicans



Dear Friends,

I am pleased to share with you *European Anglicans*, a selection of news stories from the Diocese in Europe.

There are many ways in which we aim to get our message across in this Diocese. Most of our communication is now online. That does not mean, however, we should dispense with the written word on paper to spread our news right across the geographical expanse this Diocese covers. At a time of increasing budgetary pressures on the Diocese, the challenge is *how* to do this.

This newsletter aims, in particular, to meet the needs of friends in the Diocese who tell me "I really would like something in my hands that I can look at, turn some pages and read."

In these pages, you will find a collation of news items taken from content published on the Diocesan website. We are grateful to the Friends who have supported generously the development of our website, and I thought it would be good to demonstrate the ways in which its material can be used.

This publication is a trial run as a format that may potentially become a more regular Diocesan communication. I would welcome your feedback on it.

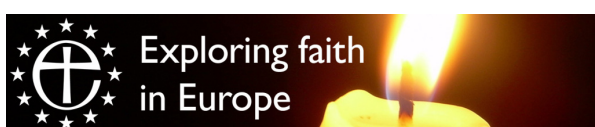
With kind regards,



Handwritten signature of Damian Thwaites in black ink on a white background.



According to tradition the relics of the Magi lie in the great Cathedral of the city where our Diocesan Synod meets, Cologne.



Epiphany: The boundless limits of the love of God

Bishop David Hamid

Drawing on all three lectionary readings set for the Feast of the Epiphany (Isaiah 60.1-6; Ephesians 3.1-12; Matthew 2.1-12) Bishop David Hamid, Suffragan Bishop of the Diocese in Europe, draws on his experience to reflect on the history and meaning of the Feast, and the varied ways that it is celebrated in the countries of our diocese.

Epiphany (Greek *epiphaneia* – manifestation, appearance, or showing forth) is possibly the oldest festival in the Christian calendar, after Easter. The Ancient Eastern Church celebrated the baptism of our Lord on this day when a voice from heaven declared, ‘This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased’, thus showing to the world who this man Jesus was. To this was added a focus on the wedding at Cana and Christ’s first miracle, showing his divine nature. In the Western Church the Feast of the Nativity was celebrated, perhaps to displace the pagan feast of Sol Invictus, the Invincible Sun. Around the 4th century scholars think there was an ‘exchange of feasts’, with the West additionally adopting Epiphany and the East also taking on Christmas.

The Magi are central to the Gospel of the day – possibly Babylonian astrologers or religious wise men from ancient Persia (modern day Iran, which borders with our Diocese in Europe). The Old Testament was widely known in the ancient lands of Babylonia and Persia. There was a presence of Jews in exile there in the 6th century BC and some of the deportees’ descendants never returned to Judea. Wise men in those lands would know of the sacred texts of the Jews who lived among them. Isaiah, with its themes of light and darkness, (Arise, shine; for your light has come...for darkness shall cover the earth ...nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn) may have had a particular resonance for eastern sages especially if they were adherents of the ancient Zoroastrian religion, which has cosmic dualistic leanings: day and night, good and evil.

Christians have read St Matthew’s story of the Magi in conjunction with Psalm 72 where in verse 10 we read ‘The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall pay tribute; the kings of Sheba and Seba shall bring gifts’ and with Isaiah 60.1-6, which speaks of gold and frankincense. Fr Nicholas King SJ (who was our Bible Scholar at the last Diocesan Readers’ Conference) points out in his translation of the Bible that not only should the reference to gold and frankincense immediately alert us to the gifts brought by the Magi, but also Isaiah

speaks of camels, which is why we think that the Wise Men came on camels, for this mode of transport is not mentioned by Matthew at all! Throughout the countries of our Diocese can be found a richness of Epiphany traditions. The Armenian Church continues to celebrate both the birth and the baptism of Jesus Christ on the same day, the 6th day of January. It is a lively festival in Spain, *el Día de los Reyes Magos*, the Feast of the Three Kings, perhaps most important for children for on this day (not Christmas) they receive their presents. The French enjoy an almond cake called *Galette des Rois*, the King's cake, which usually has a toy crown or a figurine of the baby Jesus inside, and is topped with a gold paper crown. In Russia (although the Church there observes the Julian calendar, 13 days behind the Gregorian) Epiphany is marked by cutting holes in the ice of lakes and rivers, often in the shape of the cross, to bathe in the freezing water! In German speaking lands, from the reference in the Gospel to the Magi "entering the house" where Mary, Joseph and the child Jesus was, people bless their houses after the Epiphany mass by marking over the entrance door with chalk: 20+C+M+B+19 (for this year). The initials either stand for *Christus mansionem benedicat* (Christ bless this house) or for the traditional names of the three kings: Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar.

These names date from the 9th century but became symbolic of the three human groups from the then known three continents of Asia, Africa and Europe, to point to Jesus's manifestation to the Gentiles, the nations of the world, signified in the persons of the Magi. In later years the three kings were also

associated with the phases of human life – youth, maturity and old age. This tradition underlines a truth basic to Christian teaching: God's salvation is not offered just to one exclusive group. St Paul speaks to this truth in the second reading,

'In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now

been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that is, the Gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel' (Ephesians 3.5-6).



These days in Europe there is pressure on governments to exclude people from other countries. In some places foreigners are becoming suspect. But Epiphany tells us that there is no exclusivity with Christ; there is no one outside the boundaries of God's love.

"From a pure virgin by divine command appeared the light that lighteneth man's days.

A brilliant star proclaimed the glad event in the far heaven shone its ardent blaze.

The Persian magi saw the effulgent star, illumining the sky like solar rays.

Towards Bethlehem with joyful steps they sped to offer him their precious gift and praise."

(Translation of words by the modern Persian poet, Hamidi, in the Church of St Simon the Zealot, Shiraz, Iran)

Epiphany challenges us to expand our tents to welcome everyone. Even pagan astrologers were among the first to worship him and were blessed by his presence.

The celebration of the arrival of wise men from the East represent a new

beginning for humanity. They represent the entire human race's longing for the light of God's grace and truth. They symbolise the procession of all of God's children from every part of the world, who are on the way, seeking Christ, and who on finding him offer gifts and worship. Christ our God is for all the peoples of the earth. This is the thrilling message of Epiphany.

Diocesan photo competition winner

And the winner is ... St Edmund's Church, Oslo which brilliantly represented the competition theme of "beautiful place or building in the locality where your community gathers".

Chosen from more than 30 entries, this is the best photograph of the year for 2018, selected by Bishop Robert.

The prize goes to Darren McCallig, from St Edmund's Church Oslo, for his picture which brilliantly represents this year's theme "beautiful place or building in the locality where your community gathers".

The runners up were: Jeanne Hancock, Holy Trinity Anglican Church Utrecht, Netherlands; Ian Roberts Chaplaincy of Aquitaine, France; Rev Rob Keane from St Vincent's Chaplaincy West - Igreja Nossa Senhora da Luz, Portugal; Laila Eyegue-Nzome from St Michael's Church Paris, France

All five photographs are on display in the Bishop's Brussels office.

We look forward to the 2019 Photo Contest, so get those cameras ready!

Thank you all for taking part in the competition, all of your pictures and the time and trouble you took to send them to us are much appreciated.



Church of England in Italy signs Treaty with Republic of Italy

We are delighted to announce that on 26th of March 2019 at Palazzo Chigi the Treaty (Intesa) between the Republic of Italy and the Associazione Chiesa d'Inghilterra "ACDI" (which represents the Church of England in Italy) was signed.

The Revd Vickie Sims, as President of the Associazione Chiesa d'Inghilterra, signed on behalf of the Church of England in Italy with the

Undersecretary of State On. Giancarlo Giorgetti, representing the Italian Government and the Prime Minister On. Giuseppe Conte.

This is an immensely important milestone towards the full legal recognition of the chaplaincies and congregations in Italy.

All the members of ACDI, i.e. chaplaincies and congregations in Italy of the Archdeaconry of Italy and Malta, Diocese in Europe, Church of England,



will benefit from what is agreed in the Treaty (Intesa). Such benefits are numerous and include the full legal recognition by the Republic of Italy of the Confessione Anglicana of the Church of England; the Treaty will also allow chaplains to access the Italian clergy pension scheme, permit foreign clergy to apply for a “religious visa” to live in Italy, recognise legally weddings celebrated according to the Anglican rite, consent clergy to visit officially in prisons and hospitals, and other rights for Anglican workers, students, soldiers, charities and cemeteries.

Furthermore, donations made from Italian resident tax payers to the Associazione Chiesa d’Inghilterra (or to its member churches) may be deducted from the tax payers’ taxes. The Treaty also admits ACDI to become part of the 8 per mille scheme which sees “tax rebates” from Italian resident tax payers apportioned out to the various recognised churches in Italy now including the Church of England.

The Treaty was signed at Palazzo Chigi in Rome, in the presence of senior representatives:

- H.E. Jill Morris CMG, British Ambassador to the Republic of Italy and the Republic of San Marino and Board Member of ACDI;
- The Rt Revd Dr Robert Innes, Bishop of the Diocese in Europe, Church of England;
- The Very Revd Dr John Shepherd, Interim Director of the Anglican Centre in Rome and Representative of the Archbishop of Canterbury to the Holy See

and Board Member of ACDI;

- Paolo Coniglio, Secretary General and Board Member of ACDI;
- Uff. Giampaolo Grazian, Vice-President and Board Member of ACDI;
- ssa Wendy Wyver, Political Counsellor at the British Embassy in Rome;
- Gerardo Kaiser, Senior Political Analyst at the British Embassy in Rome;
- The Revd Canon Jonathan Boardman, founder member of ACDI;
- Mrs Sandra Seagram Annovazzi, founder Member of ACDI;
- Salvatore Bordonali, Professor of Ecclesiastical Law from the University of Palermo Italy;
- Roberto Chieppa, Segretario Generale della Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri della Repubblica Italiana, and;
- ssa Anna Nardini, Consigliere alla Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri della Repubblica Italiana.

The signing ceremony also served as an occasion to offer our deep thanks to the those, who over the past thirteen years, gave freely and generously of their professional time and talent. We also thank all those members of the Italian government who guided us in this long and complex journey. Further steps do remain, including the passing of the appropriate bill in the Italian Parliament.

The signing ceremony on Tuesday 26th of March 2019 was a ‘preceremony’ which will culminate in the signing of the final Treaty by the Italian Prime Minister and the President of ACDI. We continue to work towards that goal.

Save Valletta's Skyline

St Paul's Anglican Pro-Cathedral is a universally recognised Grade 1 building of local stone in the World Heritage City of Valletta. It pays homage to St Paul who was shipwrecked there in about AD 60 and brought Christianity to Malta. 2019 marks the 175th Anniversary of its foundation. The church forms an intrinsic part of the cultural heritage of Malta and contributes a pre-eminent element of Valletta's architectural landscape and skyline.

Organisers of the Committee to restore the Pro-Cathedral are appealing for extra support after the target for a major restoration project set at €3 million, has now risen to €8 million.

The analysis of the state of the fabric and structural stability of the Cathedral has taken 2 years of the most thorough research and preparation by leading Maltese architects, 'Architectural Project' and the project has proved to be more complex and challenging than first envisaged – and inevitably more costly.

Appeal Committee member, Joanna Oswin explains:

“Exterior scanning and geo radar checks of the building have now identified the unexpected presence of iron bracing around the base of the tower and spire, showing signs of corrosion. World War Two bomb damage has also been discovered. The revised completion date of this complex project is now set at late 2021.”

The Appeal has received EU funding of €4.2 million for Phase 1 of the project. Its own fundraising initiatives have raised a further €1.05 million to date – drawn from hundreds of individuals both in Malta and abroad, from special events, from charitable trusts, a number of large corporate donors and from HRH The Prince of Wales. This gives the Appeal budget of €5.25 million – enabling a start on the first phase of the project.

Phase 1 will consist of repairing the most vulnerable part of the Cathedral to ensure the safety and structure of the iconic 60 metre (200 foot) tower and spire. It is hoped to start work on site within the next three months.



Tenders have gone out and the bids will be in shortly. This will be followed by the restoration of the external fabric of the church.

The Restoration Appeal application to the EU for funding also included **Phase 2** of the project, for which funding is still under review. This focuses essentially on the roof and ceiling of the Cathedral, amounting in all to a further €3 or €4 million. Organisers hoped that this might become available in due course, dependent on how other government bids for EU funding progress. Further funds are needed for professional and technical fees, not covered by EU funding. The project needs prepared to withstand further changes to plan if new situations arise.

The Restoration Appeal committees, both in Malta and the UK, are continuing their major fundraising campaigns to save this magnificent cathedral which is such an iconic feature of the Valletta skyline.

Joanna Oswin tells us:

“The target has more than doubled to €8 million – but the good news is that we have now received a substantial grant from the EU. However, we've still got a long way to go and every bit of support is important to us.”

She adds:

“When the restoration has been completed, the Cathedral will stand at the epicentre of an economically and culturally regenerated part of the capital city and act as a vibrant community

centre and tourist attraction.”

Since its launch in March 2017, the Appeal has attracted some prominent press coverage, including in the Sunday Times in the UK, and the Times of Malta, most recently in February. The project has also attracted ecumenical support from the Roman Catholic Bishop of Gozo, who organised a collection during Lent 2017.

For further information and details of how donate are at: www.savethecathedral.com

Travels with Bishop Robert in Turkey

*The Revd James Buxton
Chaplain at Izmir and Area Dean of Turkey*

In the extreme south east of Turkey alongside the Syrian border south of the great city of Diyarbakir, there lies a rocky plateau called Tur Abdin, meaning ‘Mountain of the Servants of God’. It is the ancient heartland of the Syrian Orthodox Church. It is a place of remote monasteries and Christian villages, but clinging to Christian faith in this area over many turbulent centuries has been tough, and has required bravery, sacrifice and resilience. Many Christians in this area lost their lives in the turmoil of the early 20th century, and economic and security problems meant that there was a steady flow out of the area in the 20th century. Now just a few thousand Syrian Orthodox Christians remain, amongst a large Kurdish population, but we were glad to see that there are some encouraging signs of growth here, for the first time in years.

I first travelled to this fascinating area in the early 1990s during the course of a long journey in the Middle East. Longstanding friendships exist between the Church of England and the clergy and laity of this area. My own predecessor as Chaplain in Izmir, the Ven Geoffrey Evans is fondly remembered, as is the tractor which our Diocese purchased to help the monastery of Mar Gabriel in the early 1980s.

I was delighted when Bishop Robert told me last year that he would like to make a visit with me. We flew to the beautiful city of Mardin on 13 February 2018 and were met by our host, the Bishop of Mardin and Diyarbakir (Bishop Saliba), who took us by car along the Turkish

side of the Syrian border, with its forbidding concrete walls and surveillance towers, to the city of Nusaybin. For further details of this fascinating visit see Bishop Robert’s blog.

We continued our journey that afternoon to the monastery of Mor Augin, dramatically situated among the cliffs overlooking the Mesopotamian plain. Because of poor security and general decline in the area the monastery was abandoned in the mid 1970s. We were delighted and impressed to meet Fr Yokim, the energetic young abbot, who is in the process of restoring the monastery and has resident students (Syrian Orthodox young men from the local area and from Germany) who assist him and gain a theological and biblical education with him. After attending prayers in the church, we were invited to sit and chat in the monastery parlour, warmed by a roaring woodstove.



Bishop Robert with monks and students in the monastic parlour, Mor Augin Monastery.

We then drove back to Deirulzeferen (‘The Saffron Monastery’), where we were to stay during our visit. This is an impressive (and amazingly ancient...) edifice in a secluded valley, a few miles outside bustling Mardin.

Monastic offices are chanted in church by monks, schoolboys (who board in the monastery) and young men who acts as guides and Syriac teachers. Worship involves many vigorous prostrations, which remind us of Islamic prayer, but in fact predate Islamic prayers! Christian witness has taken place here since the early centuries of our faith. We were glad to see how that witness continues, when on the following day, we visited



The entrance to Deirulzeferen Monastery, Mardin.

Christian communities and churches in Mardin (Syrian Orthodox, Syrian Catholic, Chaldean Catholic and Protestant). The eight or nine monasteries which remain in the Tur Abdin area continue to be a source of inspiration and encouragement for the Christian communities in this area, and their abbots and bishops are important community leaders.

After our short but profoundly moving visit, we flew to Izmir (on Saturday 16), arriving just in time for a rehearsal for the next day's celebration of baptism and confirmation at St John's Anglican church. Sunday 17 February was a proud day for our community, which will be remembered for years. The bishop baptized and confirmed 9 candidates, three of whom were received into the Anglican Communion. The celebration was the culmination of a period of discernment and preparation which began in January last year, and which involved using the Alpha Course (which it turns out you can obtain with Farsi subtitles, making it very suitable for our group!).



Bishop Robert stands with the Churchwardens of St John's Church, surrounded by the chaplain and the newly baptised, confirmed and received in the Communion of the Church of England on 17 February 2019.



Bishop Robert with Fr Gabriel, head monk of Deirulzeferen monastery in the pre-Christian sun temple, which lies underneath the sixth century monastery chapel. Note the astonishing ceiling, made of ingeniously placed stone blocks.



Bishop Robert and Bishop Saliba, with Fr James Buxton, and residents of the monastery: a monk, monastery guides and Syriac teachers and schoolboys



Ecumenical dinner hosted by Bishop Robert on 17th February 2019 at Recep Usta Restaurant, Izmir.

In the evening the bishop hosted a remarkable ecumenical dinner, which included the Roman Catholic and Orthodox archbishops of Izmir, as well as Protestant pastors, Christian workers and members of St John's Church Council. It was a pleasure to be able to host our Christian brothers and sisters in this city where Christians form a tiny minority and need to support and pray for each other, to maintain and develop the Christian witness

here, which dates back to the Biblical period. A witness that has involved so much suffering and loss as well as joyful celebration of God's blessing and faithfulness.

Chrism Eucharist 2019 - Paris

In the aftermath of the fire that ravaged the Notre Dame de Paris, Bishop Robert spoke of his deep shock in his Chrism Eucharist address given at St Michael's Church, Paris:

"We gather on the Wednesday of Holy Week. On Monday, French Television broadcast an inspiring liturgy for Palm Sunday from Notre Dame de Paris. I find it hard to believe that such a magnificent setting for worship will now be closed for a long time."

Bishop Robert continued:

"I feel an especial link to the cathedral, because I was invited to preach there for Remembrance Sunday 2018, the centenary of the armistice. I well remember looking down the majestic nave from the pulpit to the stunning rose window in the West Wall.

I was deeply shocked to see the building ablaze on Monday night ... so, today, we join our prayers with the Christian communities of France, praying the Notre Dame will rise once more to be a place of witness to the risen Christ, and that we will be strengthened in our service of the Lord Jesus."

The Diocese issued a statement from the Archdeacon of France, The Ven Meurig Williams, on Monday evening, which you read on the French Archdeaconry website.

Bishop Robert has written a personal letter to the Archbishop of Paris. The Church Times has carried Diocesan comment, and both the Bishop and the Archdeacon have used social media, and media interviews to express the Diocese's support for our friends in the Archdiocese of Paris, and at Notre Dame.

Following discussions initiated by the Diocese, it has been arranged for Church of England parishes to ring their bells this evening (Thursday, 18th April). And the Diocese

continues to work closely with the British Embassy, Paris.

Secularism in Europe

In his address, Bishop Robert also considered the challenge of secularism in Europe:

"Yes, we know that the age of Christendom is coming or has already come to a close. Modern Europe is pluralistic. The church no longer has significant political power.

Bishop Robert specifically addressed the context of secularism in France, saying:

"I heard recently an anglo-saxon preacher refer to France as 'by some measure the most secular of European nations'. I don't entirely agree with that. 'Laïcité', the separation of church and state, does not mean the elimination of religion."

And he further observed in his address:

"During the great fire at Notre Dame, people were seen on the bridges of Paris praying and singing hymns. The president was seen walking the fire-ravaged site almost arm in arm with the cathedral dean.

In such a context, evangelism is not eliminated, but it does require subtlety and imagination. How to preach Christ to a continent that both rejects and yet deeply longs for its historic faith?"

You can read the full text of Bishop Robert's address below.

Chrism Eucharist Paris 2019 – Bishop Robert Innes

We gather on the Wednesday of Holy Week. On Monday, French Television broadcast an inspiring liturgy for Palm Sunday from Notre Dame de Paris. I find it hard to believe that such a magnificent setting for worship will now be closed for a long time. I feel an especial link to the cathedral, because I was invited to preach there for Remembrance Sunday 2018, the centenary of the armistice. I well remember looking down the majestic nave from the pulpit to the stunning rose window in the West Wall. I was deeply shocked to see the building ablaze on Monday night.

During this Holy Week, we accompany our Catholic brothers and sisters on the way of the cross. Today we rededicate ourselves to Christian ministry. As we confront the destruction of crucifixion, we remain confident that it leads to resurrection and new life. So, today, we join our prayers with the Christian communities of France, praying the Notre Dame will rise once more to be a place of witness to the risen Christ, and that we will be strengthened in our service of the Lord Jesus.

Now this annual gathering gives especial opportunity to think about the circumstances under which we proclaim the gospel, and what it means to proclaim it in a fresh and relevant way. So, in my address this morning, I want to put before you three important features of our contemporary European context before thinking together about the art and practice of our shared ministry together.

Three points then about context, of which the first is that, like it or not we are ministering at a time of technological revolution. Personally, I have been slow to recognise this. But the penny dropped when I was with a group of monks in one of the world's most ancient Christian monasteries. As we sat around a woodburning stove in our cassocks somewhere near the border between Turkey and Syria, I noticed to my astonishment that each of us held in our laps a mobile phone. Ancient faith, ancient monastery, but all clutching one of these amazingly powerful hand held computing and communications devices. A previous generation of monks would never have believed it!

The technological revolution carries both great promise and great peril. And we as Christian leaders have opportunity to interact with it and to some extent to shape it. To be clear, by technological revolution we can include not just mobile phones, social media and the internet, but artificial intelligence, big data and robotics. Taking all that together, the technology is transforming not just the way we communicate, but how we interact, how we work, how we understand ourselves and indeed who we are. And it is very powerful. Modern computers learned to play chess better than humans and they have now learned how to play the more complex game of 'Go' better than humans. And they learn by practising on themselves. Bishop Steven Croft speaks on artificial intelligence issues in the UK's House of Lords. He recalls computer scientists saying to him: 'You do not understand how powerful this stuff is. You must give us input to help us know how to live well.'

The challenges are wide-ranging. There is, for example, the question of public truth and political debate. So we know that micro-targeting of adverts probably made a difference to the last two US elections and to the UK referendum debate. Then there are big questions around the future of work. In the UK, 25% of supermarket checkout assistants lost their jobs due to automation in between 2011 and 2017. Warehousing, distribution centres and call centres will be affected next. Overall it is estimated that 40% of jobs are at risk through automation in the next 20 years, with other different jobs being created. What will it mean for my new grandson to grow up probably never learning to drive a car?

Data protection and privacy issues are huge: it is frequently said that Facebook knows all about you, and Google knows what you are looking for. Now with Alexa and Home Monitoring, the same companies that track what you buy, what you watch and where you go online can be right there in your home. Alongside this, workplace monitoring increasingly tracks employee keystrokes, conversations and movements around the office. Bentham's asylum is becoming a reality by stealth. If we don't find that scary, well perhaps we should?

What is the impact of this revolution on children? Some of the signs are deeply worrying. The Children's Society tell us that in the UK nearly one in four girls cut themselves last year. Have a look at Bishop Rachel's video 'Liedentity' on the Diocese of Gloucester website to see the effect of social media saturation on teenage girls' body image. On-line gambling is carefully designed with sounds and lights to trigger endorphin releases that will hook people. 25,000 children under 16 in the UK, mainly boys, are problem gamblers. The new technology is creating huge pressures for children.

I am only scratching the surface...But, I wonder:

- Where the forums in our diocese that we talk about these things? How are our local churches engaged? And our youth leaders?
- What does it mean to be bearers of good news in this context?

Well the good news, as Jesus declares at Nazareth, is liberation. We are liberated for living in the truth. We are liberated for living in community. We are known, each of us, by a God who knows us completely and has our welfare at heart. (Psalm 139); unlike the big corporations

who know us to profit from us. We are created in order to be loved; not to be harvested. And its best, the church is an intergenerational community which makes that love real.

But the technology is also there for the church to use in its own mission. 'A church near you' is doing digital profiling to work out which groups would respond most positively to an invitation to church. The ICS mission agency is doing its own targeted facebook advertising amongst 40-60 years olds who visit the Swiss resort of Zermatt. And Scripture Union has invested more than a million pounds in a wonderful and properly professional computer game called Guardians of Ancora. Check it out and give it to your children or grandchildren! The technological revolution is a fundamental part of our context, as threat but also as promise.

But, and secondly, perhaps the element of our context at the forefront of our minds in these weeks and months is probably not technology so much as politics. British politics in particular, but also European politics more generally, is in a worrying place and we are all feeling the anxiety and the tension.

In Europe we have inherited some excellent Christian ideals for political life - concepts such as subsidiarity within states, solidarity between states, human dignity, individual freedom. These contributed to foundation of the British welfare state, the beginnings of the European Project, and the formation of the UN. Christians and secularists crafted together a postwar order which engendered a remarkable period of Western peace and prosperity.

But in recent decades that rich political culture has been drastically thinned out. On the one hand, we have the prosperous, mobile elites concentrated in the finance and information economies and the big cities. On the other hand, we have the sedentary majority who inhabit the peripheries. Those who feel 'left behind' are increasingly frustrated by their perceived disconnect from centres of influence. And their confidence in democratic structures is ebbing away dramatically. The rise of the far right is a very real and scary phenomenon across Europe. Frans Timmermans, First Vice-President of the European Commission said to a group of us a few months ago: 'The May European elections will determine not just what kind of European Union we have but whether there will be a European Union.' And so too in Britain, a survey produced by the Hansard Society, indicated that trust in politics has reached an all-time low.

Scarcely a majority are saying Britain 'now needs a strong leader who is willing to break the rules'. Well Europe has previous experience of strong right-wing leaders doesn't it.

I am especially aware of the tensions and pressures Brexit and political uncertainty is placing on British people in our diocese. There is real anxiety and real suffering.

But churches can help. We are a key intermediate institution between the family and the state. Churches can be places where people meet to talk and support one another. As Christian leaders we can help signpost people to the best information. We can advocate for our people. And we can reach ecumenically across the political and national divides to build fraternity and solidarity.

Then thirdly, and briefly, the challenge of secularism. But here the situation is ambiguous. Yes, we know that the age of Christendom is coming or has already come to a close. Modern Europe is pluralistic. The church no longer has significant political power. But spiritual needs remain and the deep roots of historic Christian faith are not yet eliminated. I heard recently an anglo-saxon preacher refer to France as 'by some measure the most secular of European nations'. I don't entirely agree with that. 'Laicite', the separation of church and state, does not mean the elimination of religion. During the great fire at Notre Dame, people were seen on the bridges of Paris praying and singing hymns. The president was seen walking the fire-ravaged site almost arm in arm with the cathedral dean. In such a context, evangelism is not eliminated, but it does require subtlety and imagination. How to preach Christ to a continent that both rejects and yet deeply longs for its historic faith?

I have talked about our technological context and more briefly about our political context and more briefly still our secular spiritual context. If this seems challenging for Christian ministry: indeed it is! But that means, too, our potential to make a difference is huge. The art and practice of leading Christian communities in Europe in 2019 is difficult but also immensely rewarding.

To do it well, I believe we need to be ourselves open to learning and to change. In the first case, that means staying in touch with one another. No one person has all the gifts, experience and knowledge to be adequate for the challenges of the present age. We need to meet together to share, support and educate each other; whether physically like today or via skype or zoom.

Along with this, we need to reflect carefully on our own practise of ministry so as to continually refine and improve it. And here we might be able to learn from the art of ballet. A lady bishop, Libby Lane, was telling a group of us recently about her experience as a ballet dancer. Libby spent many hours as a youngster perfecting her ballet technique. This involved training herself in front of a mirror to get the correct body posture. Sometimes her teacher would move parts of her body into the correct position. Other times the teacher would demonstrate a move. Or encourage Libby to watch another dancer who had got the move correct. Then the whole ballet troupe would practice in a room surrounded by mirrors so that they could check they had the posture and the moves correct. It was all done with mirrors.

Many of us were taught in our theological colleges or courses to be 'reflective practitioners'. But the principle applies at all stages of ministry. Holding up a mirror to ourselves. So I wonder, what mirrors do you have? A spouse, a close colleague, a coach, a spiritual friend, a mentor? As a bishop, I'm undertaking a ministry development review that gives 360 degree feedback from 12 close colleagues, because I need to see myself as others see me. If you held up a mirror to your own ministry what would you see? And what elements of your practice would you want to change? In challenging times, I hope each of us can be and become reflective practitioners of the art and craft of ministry.

'The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor, he has sent me, to proclaim freedom for the captives.' We are recommissioned today to proclaim the gospel in our own deeply challenging context. May God give us the grace, the skill, the energy and the perseverance to be faithful to our calling.

Notre-Dame: Sympathy and Solidarity - New Bells Ring Out at Vernet-les-Bains

The Entente Cordiale between the UK and France was renewed as English Bells rang out in sympathy and solidarity with the people of Paris after Notre-Dame Cathedral was ravaged by fire on 15th April.

Following discussions between the British Ambassador in Paris, Edward Llewellyn and the Diocese in Europe, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York asked cathedrals and churches across England to toll their bells for seven minutes at 7pm on Maundy Thursday as a mark of solidarity.

The newly installed ring of ten bells in Vernet-les-Bains was among the churches taking part together with Westminster Abbey and St Paul's Cathedral, and cathedrals and churches across the UK.

Ten new bells from the foundry of Loughborough in England installed in early April are the first set of bells capable of English change ringing in France.

St George's church has a tower but no bells were ever installed until now. The new bells have been installed with the help and co-operation of the commune of Vernet-les-Bains and the Fondation du Patrimoine.

It was intended that the first official ringing of the new bells would take place on Easter Sunday and a group of twenty expert ringers were travelling to Vernet for this occasion. However, some ringers had arrived in advance and participated as the bells of St George's rang out in solidarity and sympathy with the people of France and especially those in Paris after the 850-year-old Notre-Dame Cathedral fire.

A quarter peal of 10 bells was rung at 10:00 am on Maundy Thursday, 18th April, by the visiting ringers, followed at 7pm by a single bell that tolled for 7 minutes.

Speaking at the ringing the Priest in Charge of St George's, Reverend David Phillips said:

"Our hearts went out to the people of France and the Christian community in Paris when we heard the terrible news of the devastating fire at Notre-Dame Cathedral. This special ringing made possible by the installation of our ten new bells is our way of showing our empathy and solidarity with all the people of France."

Revd David added:

"This time of year we average about fifteen people in church, maybe twenty on Easter



Sunday though it grows in the summer months into the twenties and thirties. This Easter Sunday we had 78 attending, many of them I think were bell ringers from all over the UK and France."

The news of the English bells in France has attracted media interest, too, with two local News programmes covering the story on TV in Roussillon. You can see two clips on YouTube. It is particularly appropriate that these English bells should be installed in Vernet-les-Bains which has long had a strong English connection. The village has the only monument to the Franco-British Entente Cordiale. This ringing emphasises the fact that this special relationship continues. For further information regarding Vernet-les-Bains, St George's website is at: <https://stgeorgesvernet-les-bainsfrance.weebly.com/> There you will find much more about the story of St George's new bells.

Swiss Archdeaconry Choir Festival

Other archdeacons have their residential synods, Switzerland has an annual residential choir festival, which brings together members of the choirs across the archdeaconry plus others who wish to experience this opportunity to work and sing together under the direction of an internationally recognised director, providing the music to enhance worship at both a choral evensong and a sung Eucharist.

This year it was Holy Trinity Geneva's turn to host 50 singers on Easter Saturday and Low Sunday from five choirs across the archdeaconry, Basel, Berne, Geneva, Lausanne, Zurich and from our sister church, Emmanuel Episcopalian Church, also in



Geneva. Mark Jones, well-known as a choir director and organist both in Switzerland and the UK, directed, with Mark Charles, Director of Music, Geneva, on the organ.

Greeted by a generous buffet, guests arrived from 5 p.m. on Friday to fortify themselves before a three-hour practice. Back again at 9 a.m. on Saturday practising continued with pauses for coffee and lunch until shortly before Choral Evensong at 5 p.m.

Opening with the Introit, 'If ye Love Me, keep my commandments', by Philip Wilby, this was an evening for music by Edmund Bairstow (1874 -1946) with his settings Magnificat and Nunc Dimitis in D, and as anthem, 'Save Us O Lord while waking'.

The Preces & Responses were by John Sanders and Psalm 150 was sung to a setting by C.V. Stanford. The Festival has a tradition of singing works in English. Dinner followed in the church hall with a Cana of Galilee moment when water was not turned into wine, but reserve stocks did miraculously appear.

The choirs returned at 9 a.m. on Sunday to practise for a further hour before accompanying the Eucharist. This time it was the turn of English composer, John Ireland (1879-1962) with the choir singing the whole of his Communion in C, Kyrie, Gloria, Creed, Sanctus and Agnus Dei, supplemented by a suitably joyous and fittingly Easter anthem, 'The Strife is O'er' by Richard Shepherd.

Somehow everyone crammed into the Chancel along with candle bearers and servers, making a merry noise on a merry and deeply spiritual occasion.

Europe Day 2019



Bishop Robert has issued a statement on Europe Day, ahead of the next elections to the European Parliament, 23-26 May:

Today across Europe we celebrate Europe Day. It is a key date in European history on which we recall the first major development in the post-war re-building of European unity. The Schuman Declaration, launched on 9 May 1950, developed into plans that founded the European Economic Community, which subsequently became the European Union we know today.

The next elections to the European Parliament take place in two weeks – 23 to 26 May. These elections come at a challenging time for Europe. Resurgent nationalism and authoritarian populism, economic struggles and unemployment, the arrival of refugees and the global ecological crisis are dramatically reshaping life in a fragile Europe. And Europe is having to redefine itself and its role amidst the shifting global economic and political power balances of our times.

This uncertain and dangerous context makes for a compelling case to vote in these elections, forty years after the first direct elections in 1979. As the Conference of European Churches has emphasised:

“Through participation in democracy, we raise our hopes for a better Europe and a better future. The European Union commits itself to justice, peace, solidarity, and human dignity. Churches share these values and believe that the economic, social, spiritual, and

ecological aspects of our lives are intertwined and cannot be dealt with in isolation.”

Since the Treaty of Lisbon in 2009, a dialogue between the EU and religious organisations has given Churches across the Union a new voice. The Diocese in Europe, representing the Church of England, participates actively in this Article 17 dialogue. Amongst other issues, in the next mandate of the European Parliament I believe we need to give especial attention to the issue of persecuted Christians worldwide, and how European States and Institutions are responding to their plight.

Across many areas of life, the European Parliament plays an important role in the European Union. Whilst originally having only the right to be consulted, its legislative power has increased, and it now has extensive powers of co-decision with the Member States. It has budgetary authority, and it exercises democratic and political supervision of the European Commission and other EU institutions.

Deep uncertainty remains on Brexit. The UK Government has confirmed that the United Kingdom will participate in these European Parliamentary elections. But whatever happens now with Brexit, Anglicans have been on the continent of Europe for over 400 years, and we are here to stay as an active Christian Church among our brother and sister Churches across Europe and, for many of our members, as voting residents or citizens of EU member states.

Simone Veil was elected as the first President of the European Parliament in July 1979. She was a Holocaust survivor who became a distinguished national political figure in France and on the European stage. In 1982, she said:

'Europe's destiny and the future of the free world are entirely in our hands.'

That statement is as relevant today as it ever was. Our right to vote is precious and a means of influence for good.

Democracy is fragile and few countries have enjoyed it for long. So I urge all Anglicans in Europe who have a vote in the European Parliamentary elections to use it.

Edith Cavell

The Diocese has held services in Belgium to mark 100 years since nurse Edith Cavell's mortal remains were repatriated to the UK, on 13 May 1919.

At Holy Trinity, Brussels, Edith Cavell, who attended the church there, was remembered; the anniversary of her execution in Brussels is commemorated annually at Holy Trinity pro-Cathedral, where there is also a plaque (pictured).

port of Ostend one hundred years before. This service was organised by the Anglican Church and the Roman Catholic Church in collaboration with the Belgian Edith Cavell Commemoration Group (BECCG) and Ostend City Council. The original plan was to hold the service at the English Church, Ostend, but due to ongoing restoration of the building, the venue instead was St Petrus and Pauluskerk.

The service was attended by Her Excellency Alison Rose, British Ambassador to Belgium, and by the Mayor of Ostend, Bart Tommelein and members of the City Council.

The service also commemorated VE day, with representatives of the Armed Forces in attendance and members of the British Legion, several of whom had travelled from England for this occasion. A parade of military personnel, veterans and Legion members was held immediately after the service with wreath-laying at various war memorials.

The service itself was dignified and thought-provoking, with standard bearers leading the procession. The service was led by Father Johannes Mwanba of the Catholic Church and Anglican Chaplain, Father Augustine Nwaekwe

The two priests welcomed all present in Dutch and English. Prayers of Penitence were said in both



There was also a special ecumenical service on 12 May at St Petrus & Paulus Ostend. Edith Cavell's mortal remains passed through the

languages. Isaiah chapter 43, verses 1-7 was the first reading and the Gospel reading was St John chapter 10, verses 27-30.

Andrew Brown, Chair of the Belgian Edith Cavell Commemoration Group spoke of Edith Cavell's life in Brussels, her strong Christian faith, her trial and execution, and the dignity with which her mortal remains were taken back to England. The hymn "Abide with Me" sung by Edith Cavell herself and her priest only hours before her execution was then sung in English.

Prayers of Intercession were led in both languages. The Eucharist prayers were said in Dutch with a section in English. The Lord's Prayer was printed in both languages.

During Communion, "Blijf mij nabij" which is a Dutch translation of "Abide with Me" was played by the organist, with two verses printed in Dutch for the congregation to sing. Closing prayers and the blessing were given by the priests and the service ended.

The commemorations continued outside the church followed by a parade through the centre of Ostend by the Town Band.

In the Town Hall there were speeches by Andrew Brown and the Mayor of Ostend. The latter spoke movingly of the need for young people to know of Edith Cavell's life and also of the need to work for peace each and every day, as individuals and as a society. An Ostend street sign of 'Edith Cavellstraat' was presented to Andrew Brown, the street named in memory of Edith Cavell after the First World War.

Fr. Augustine said:

"A reception after the service and speeches provided the opportunity to meet and share with Belgian and British civil and church community. The events were thoughtfully planned and showed a continuing shared community and cooperation between Belgian and British citizens and officials, as well as an active ecumenical spirit within the Anglican and the Roman Catholic Church in Ostend."

From 26 April to 13 May there were exhibitions on Edith Cavell at the City Hall of Ostend. More exhibitions are being planned for 2020 at the English Church, Ostend on Langestraat, when the building has been fully renovated.

About Edith Cavell:

Edith Cavell, a British nurse opened Belgium's first nursing school in Brussels in 1907. When World War One broke out in 1914, she stayed, nursing wounded Belgian, British and French soldiers. She equally helped them to escape to neutral Netherlands through an escape network which she and others had established. She was arrested in August 1915, tried and executed on 12 October that same year by a German firing squad at the Brussels "National Firing Range". After the end of World War One, on 17 March 1919, her body was exhumed from her grave. On 13 May 1919, her coffin was conveyed from Brussels North Station by train to the port of Ostend after a service conducted by the Reverend Stirling Gahan. The solemnity and dignity that accompanied the journey from Brussels to Ostend, crossing the English Channels to Dover, London and Norwich was unprecedented.

On the arrival of Edith Cavell's body in the UK, New York Times wrote the following day: "No triumphant warrior and no potentate could have received a more impressive tribute than was paid today to the mortal remains of Miss Edith Cavell as they were borne through London".

You can find out more about Edith Cavell at:

<http://www.edith-cavell-belgium.eu/edith-cavell-story.html>

Media boost for St Andrew's, Moscow

Last month, we reported on the performance of Jesus Christ Superstar, which came to St Andrew's, Moscow for a one-night only performance. Since then, the restoration appeal has received a major boost with a Times media article, and further fundraising successes!

The article below featured in the Times last month has been re-produced by kind permission of its author and distinguished international correspondent, Michael Binyon:



“Tucked away in a small street a stone’s throw from the Kremlin is a large, solid and unmistakably Anglican church that looks as though it has been transplanted from Victorian England to the heart of Moscow.

Confiscated and desecrated during the Soviet era, St Andrew’s is once again a thriving church. The Archbishop of Canterbury preached to a packed congregation during his first visit to Russia in November 2017. The Rev Canon Malcolm Rogers, a Russian-speaking English vicar, has been appointed resident chaplain and the vicarage is bustling.

Yet official communist atheism and years of neglect have taken their toll. The church needs a huge sum for restoration. In an extraordinary goodwill gesture at a time of political tension between Britain and Russia, Moscow’s city council has offered \$2.5 million to return the building to former glory — provided that its friends and worshippers can raise a minimum of \$350,000.

St Andrew’s, named after the patron saint of Russia as well as Scotland, was a thriving Anglican church until the Russian revolution in 1917. There was a large British community in Moscow in the 19th century, when manufacturers, industrialists, engineers and other specialists brought over their businesses and their families.

A chapel had already been established in Voznesensky (“Ascension”) Lane in 1825, and in 1884 the community — responsible for most of the plumbing and lavatories in Moscow, as well as the Tsum department store, schools and hospitals — opened a grand church to

plant the Anglican faith in the heart of Orthodox Russia.

The church was seized by the Bolsheviks. Its tower was turned into a machinegun post to put down any signs of rebellion during the civil war. The empty church was used for communal housing and later became part of the Finnish embassy. In 1957 it got a new lease of life. With acoustics deemed to be the best in the city after the Conservatory, it became the perfect place for a recording studio. The state Melodiya record label moved in, shored up the roof trusses and made some of the most famous recordings of Soviet artists and composers, including Shostakovich and Rostropovich. They called the studio the “Kirche” (the German word for “church”).

St Andrew’s was also where Russian pop, long denounced as western decadence, began, when the first rock music was put on vinyl in the Brezhnev era. One of the early groups was led by Stas Namin, a budding young rocker who happened to be the grandson of Anastas Mikoyan, one of Stalin’s few ministers to survive the purges. “Almost all our songs for the first 20 years were recorded in that Kirche,” he said.

The fall of communism raised hopes that religion might be allowed back into the building and from 1991 occasional religious services were permitted. Three years later the Queen made her groundbreaking state visit to Russia, and as a goodwill gesture St Andrew’s was returned to the Anglican Church association. Although the altar moved in, the studio did not move out, and for several years the clergy and congregation had to vacate the

church during weekdays to allow the microphones and musicians back.

Three years ago the final legal instruments were in place. Anglicans were given a 49-year lease with registered title rights. For the restoration, the church has called on Anglicans around the world for support. It can count among its friends half a dozen Protestant and evangelical denominations in Moscow, many with enthusiastic African members, who choose St Andrew's over the Russian Orthodox and a few Roman Catholic churches now open in Moscow.

Old loyalties have also helped. Namin — like Mick Jagger, still going strong — gave a charity performance, in English, of *Jesus Christ Superstar* in the church, donating the proceeds to St Andrew's. A Moscow architect has been appointed to modify the interior of the listed building for worship today. The grand organ has been dismantled and is being restored.

With the Most Rev Justin Welby as its patron, the church is also looking for support from Britain. Peter Pantlin, the chairman of St Andrew's friends, is hoping that anyone with a link to Russia or who cares about the revival of faith in the country will contribute.

Already the church is a centre for ecumenical and social work in the Russian capital, providing space for the Step Up post-orphanage education charity, and hosting meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous and charities for the homeless.

And, of course, music — which probably saved the church from ruin in Soviet times — will continue to be heard in the building all year long. Local choirs and classical musicians are eager to take advantage of a site made famous by some of Russia's greatest composers."

www.standrewsmoscow.org

This article first appeared in the Times on 11 May 2019.

Appeal update:

-Jesus Christ Superstar raised \$8,500.

There have been additional encouragements:

-A river cruise organised by the British Business Club has raised approximately \$18,000;

-BP (Russia) have given £15,000, and other charities (including the Goldsmiths, and Hintze foundation) have given £4,000;

-Around £600 has been raised from people sending in money to the Diocese or a Justgiving campaign as a result of the Times Article; and

-The Bishop's 2018 Advent appeal for new kitchen facilities at St Andrew's has so far raised over £12,500.

Malcolm Rogers comments:

"We are truly grateful for every contribution received from right across the Diocese. And we are thankful to UK charities, most of whom are unable to give money to projects overseas."

In total we estimate that we have raised in the last two months about \$60k of the \$350k required."

Bishop Robert has commented:

"We in the Diocese are hugely grateful to Michael Binyon for his Times article, which has given us excellent support in raising the profile of St Andrew's Moscow, and the appeal fund for its restoration. Every contribution people can give will help us reach the funding target.

We're also particularly grateful to Peter Pantlin who has been actively promoting St Andrew's and the restoration in the UK, with amazing energy and enthusiasm.

I welcome, too, the readiness of the Moscow City authorities to help us. I look forward to reviewing progress on my visit to Moscow this November, and to the opportunity to meet again with our friends in the Patriarchate of All Russias, following on from the Archbishop of Canterbury's visit to Moscow in 2017."

For more details on the St Andrew's, Moscow appeal, and how you can donate visit:

<https://moscowanglican.org/restoration/>

St. John's, Casablanca: Grand opening of the new community centre



St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church in Casablanca has its new community centre, and the grand opening was celebrated in style.

The event was hosted jointly by HM Ambassador, H.E. Mr Thom Reilly, Bishop David, and the Chaplain of St. John's, The Revd Canon Dr. Medhat Sabry and the church wardens. Among the invited guests were senior faith leaders and officials from the Moroccan authorities.

With over 200 attendees on a typical Sunday morning, St. John's serves a highly diverse, multi-denominational congregation. Although regular attendees hail from Europe, Asia and the Americas, more than half of the congregation comes from sub-Saharan Africa.

St. John the Evangelist was the first Protestant Church established in Casablanca. Constructed in 1906, it is the oldest Christian Church in the city still in use today. The site was originally provided to the British Crown under a property grant from the King of Morocco and has been the site of the British Cemetery since the 1860s. One of its most famous worshippers was Major General George Patton of the US Army who attended regularly during WWII. General Patton donated the pulpit and communion table that still grace the altar.

From 2013, St. John's found it did not have the capacity to meet the needs of its growing congregation during weekend services, and that a plan would be needed for its future. In addition, Sunday School classes were being

held under a tent and in a re-purposed shipping container. In times of inclement weather this same tent served as the fellowship area between and after services. The church lacked a permanent on-site storage area or office space, and the restroom facilities were marginal.

An expansion plan was developed envisioning new meeting and education facilities, a food preparation area, an office for the chaplain, permanent classrooms, a multipurpose room for hosting meetings and receptions, and new restrooms. And from 2015, Moroccan architect with a deep love for heritage buildings in Casablanca, Mr Abderrahim Kassou offered to take on this project...for free!

You can watch a superb video on St. John's and the development of the community centre project – it has already received close to 800 views since the opening!

<https://www.facebook.com/St-Johns-Casablanca-Morocco-in-the-Diocese-of-Europe-173632719961318/>

Commenting on the grand opening, Fr. Medhat said:

“There have been many historical moments in the life of St. John's Anglican Church, and today will stand among them as the fulfilment of a long-held dream God gave to the congregation several years back.



We are grateful to the King of Morocco, His Majesty Mohammed VI, for his hospitality in this nation, and generosity in approving this project to go forward. We are also grateful to all the appointed leaders who have been part of the approval process for the development project.



It is believed that this is the first time Morocco has granted approval for an addition to a Christian worship space in more than 60 years! We are grateful for the opportunity to practice our faith and worship and serve God in this place, during our time as guests in the kingdom of Morocco.

It has been a long journey leading up to this moment, but today we celebrate this historic moment in the story of St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church in Casablanca, and we praise God that this long-held vision has become a reality!

May this community centre be a blessing to the congregation of St. John's and the wider community of Casablanca, dedicated to God, and useful to His kingdom."

Petertide 2019: Bishops ordain priest and new deacons in the Diocese



At Petertide services over the weekend, our Bishops ordained a new priest and four new deacons in services held in Holy Trinity pro-Cathedral, Brussels and the Anglican Church of St Thomas the Apostle, Crete.

Holy Trinity pro-Cathedral, Brussels

We had a most joyful and inspirational weekend of ordinations at Holy Trinity Brussels, with services of contrasting character.

On Saturday 29th June, **Jean Bosco Turahirwa** was ordained priest by Bishop Robert at Holy Trinity pro-Cathedral, Brussels.

The majority of those present at Saturday's ordination of Jean-Bosco as priest were African, and the service had a suitably lively and informal feel. The music was sung in English, French, Kinyarwanda and Swahili. Holy Trinity welcomed Rwandan refugees in the 1990s. It is deeply gratifying that this community has now produced its first ordinand in Jean-Bosco. Jean-Bosco will continue to serve as assistant curate at Holy Trinity.

On Sunday 30th June, the Bishop ordained **Mathias Kissel, Evelyn Sweerts** and **Roxana Teleman** as new deacons. The service was dignified and beautiful and led by a robed choir. We welcomed guests



from France, Switzerland and Luxembourg who had made long journeys to support Roxana, Mathias and Evelyn.

In his sermon, Bishop Robert preached on St Paul's letter to the Romans 12:1-13, in which the apostle addresses how we should live in a new and inclusive community as Christians before God in the world. The Bishop emphasised Christian belief in a gospel of transformation, that we may be able to discern God's will for us. In this context, the large Church of England project called "Setting God's People Free" is an effort with two aims. Its first aim is to shift our focus from what goes on inside church and instead help us all to live as Christians Monday to Sunday in our homes, communities and workplaces. Second, "Setting God's People Free" aims to address the question of how clergy and lay people properly value and complement each other. In the context of the Body of Christ, the dynamics are community in which each is dependent upon all the others, gifts are shared and the whole is built up in love.

Bishop Robert noted his love for the fact that Holy Trinity has for its beautiful West Window a picture of the Holy Spirit falling on the iconic Brussels Grand Place, as a reminder to us all to be very concerned with how we work out our faith in the world. He said deacons are called

to an outward-facing ministry. And that in a well-functioning church, people work together to build each other up and to release energy for service in the world.

Holy Trinity Brussels did a magnificent job of welcoming everyone and of providing meals after both services.

Our three new deacons ordained in Brussels will now embark on serving their chaplaincies across the Diocese. Mathias will serve as assistant curate at the Anglican Church, Basel; Evelyn at the Anglican Church of Luxembourg; and Roxana at the Anglican Church of the Holy Trinity, Nice, with St Hugh, Vence.

Church of St Thomas the Apostle, Crete

Diocesan history was made on Sunday 30th June. The ordination of **Julia Bradshaw** as deacon in St Thomas Church in Kefalas, Crete, was the first time in the diocese that three distinctive deacons were together for such a liturgical event. Of course, Deacon Julia, the ordinand, was the reason we were all in Crete. She is the assistant curate in St Thomas Church, Kefalas, within the Greater Athens Chaplaincy. The preacher for the service was Deacon Christine Saccali, who also serves the Greater Athens Chaplaincy in St Paul's Athens. The Deacon of the mass was Frances Hiller, Bishop David's Chaplain.

The Church of St Thomas is open to the air, so although the temperature was in the low 30s,

the full congregation present for the ordination rite were kept cool by refreshing breezes from the Mediterranean. Our singing was also enhanced by a chorus of cicadas!

In her sermon, Deacon Chris, a classics scholar, (as well as fluent in modern Greek) drew attention to the root of the word *deacon* relating to dust, and dusting, and reminded Julia of the deacon's role in "spring-cleaning" the church and the world. She emphasised the servant role of the deacon, as a sign of Christ's own ministry of service.

Clergy from many parts of England attended the service, particularly some who have known Julia through training at ERMC. The new deacon's training incumbent, the Revd Bruce Bryant-Scott, Acting Archdeacon Adèle Kelham, and our Diocesan Registrar, Mr Aiden Hargreaves-Smith, all had significant roles to play in the solemn rite.

We rejoice that those ordained in the Diocese this Pentecost weekend have pledged themselves to the service of God and his church, and we continue to hold them in our prayers as they minister among us.

Ministry Experience Scheme: Saying 'thank you'

Clare Amos
Co-ordinator, Ministry Experience Scheme

It is good to be reminded that saying thank you is at the heart of our Christian faith and spirituality. Indeed one of the names, 'Eucharist', for the central act of Christian worship simply means 'thanksgiving'.

A gathering at Westminster Abbey in the evening of 24 June was an opportunity to say 'thank you' to a number of trusts and individuals whose generosity has enabled the Ministry Experience Scheme of the Diocese in Europe to develop and flourish over the last few years and to continue into the future.

This Scheme enables young people who are thinking seriously about a vocation to ordained

or full time lay ministry in the Church to explore their vocation, working as an intern in one of the chaplaincies in the Diocese, alongside a programme offering targeted educational and personal support. The gathering at Westminster Abbey coincided with the last group meeting for the 2018-2019 interns.

Short speeches of appreciation were made by two of the interns, Erik van Heemskerck of the Netherlands, and Sharon Ejinkonye from Chelmsford, who interned in Tervuren, Belgium.

Erik commented:

"It's been a privilege for me to have been on the Ministry Experience Scheme this year. In this year we've been on many pilgrimages to different places, but I also feel I've been on a personal pilgrimage: in listening to God's call for my life and for exploring and growing in this role in the church... Sharing this journey together was a great encouragement to me. It also helped me and I am sure the others in seeing both the richness and the diversity of the body of Christ, within the Church of England.

One of the great privileges on this journey was to be accompanied by other MES-interns, who had similar questions about God's call in their lives but completely different backgrounds... I've thoroughly enjoyed our year and it is helped me a lot in my journey of faith, growing in my vocation and I will treasure the wonderful memories and experiences and take with me the valuable lessons in Lyon, in the Holy Land, in Ypres, in Brussels, in Utrecht and now in London."

Erik and Sharon's appreciation and thanks was echoed by Ms Mary Talbot, one of the Scheme's pastoral mentors, who had herself worked hard to raise funds for the programme.

Mary reflected:

"It has been a privilege to watch the interns grow and develop both as people and Christians and to become more confident in their calling, whatever that might be. They are a positive force in the churches to which they are assigned, bringing new ideas and acting as role models for other young people. The

members of the Diocesan Synod look forward to their yearly appearance, where they significantly reduce the average age ! ...We are now one of 27 dioceses participating in the programme and our model is the envy of quite a lot of them. We have given great weight to the educational element of the programme ; to the support of various supervisors and mentors, as well as to the practical experience of ministry in a parish.”

Mary went on to thank also William Gulliford, the Diocesan Director of Ordinands, whose creativity and hard work had led to the development of the particular model of the Scheme which operates in our diocese. As Mary said, “William is a deeply caring person, always there for the candidates and others,

seeking postings, seeking placements, advising on colleges, providing guidance and practical support of all kinds. ... All this takes an enormous amount of time, so I think somewhat reluctantly he has recently handed over the management of the programme to Clare Amos. I think all of us owe him an enormous debt of gratitude for all that he has done to establish this so successfully in Europe.Thank you William.”

Thanks are also due to Canon Anthony Ball, for the generous gift of the hospitality of his house and garden which enabled the reception to take place, and for facilitating a special tour for the group of the recently restored Triphorium of Westminster Abbey.



Photo by Edoardo Fanfani. The pictures were taken in the garden of Canon Anthony Ball, Canon Steward of Westminster Abbey.

