

# DIOCESE IN EUROPE

# *European Anglicans*

## Message from Our Bishops

Welcome to the Diocese in Europe's 2019 Annual Review. We are delighted to present a Review covering the life of the Diocese over the past twelve months, produced as an issue of *European Anglicans*, our new Diocesan publication launched this summer.

People across the length and breadth of the Diocese have again made possible the stories and the content that have gone into this Review, and for this we are truly grateful. Clearly, there are more highlights, reflections and achievements than there is space to acknowledge. The Review is a *tour d'horizon* of selected stories and images drawn from the published content of the Diocesan website, and our Bishops' blogs over the course of this year. We hope you will enjoy them once more here.

An important theme of our efforts this year has been consolidation. Among these include continued work to secure our long-term financial position. We are thankful for the increased contributions this year from chaplaincies to our common fund, and we welcome significant steps on future common funding arrangements. We have also been successful in the award of further strategic funding from the Church Commissioners that will provide us with more full-time stipendiary Archdeacons. Our new central senior staff have now been in post for a year: Andrew Caspari as Diocesan Secretary/Chief Operating Officer; Susan Stelfox as Head of Finance; and Damian Thwaites as Diocesan Bishop's Attaché to the European Institutions and Director of Communications. We have also welcomed Grace Fagan in November, who has succeeded Andrea Watkins as Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser. Their impact on shaping the work and future direction of the Diocese is already discernible.

We said farewell to Colin Williams in March, and Geoff Johnston in November as they retired from their archidiaconal roles, and from full-time ministry. We wish them both every blessing and happiness in their retirements. Paul Wignall has joined us as Director of Readers, in succession to Elaine Labourel, whom we warmly thank for her generous service. In October we welcomed Leslie Nathaniel as Archdeacon of the East, Germany, and Northern Europe. We look forward to the installation of David Waller, as new Archdeacon of Gibraltar, Italy and Malta in January 2020; and Ian Tarrant, as next Dean of the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, Gibraltar, in April 2020.

We are, and remain, European Anglicans. Our Church has deep historical roots in Europe going back centuries, and will continue to be an enduring presence across its geographical expanse. This should give us reassurance, particularly as the UK's exit from the European Union now approaches. We are very conscious of the impact and anxiety this may have for many friends living and working currently in the European Union. You may be assured that the Diocese will continue to support you both spiritually, in prayer and fellowship, and practically, through sustained advocacy and action on key issues and concerns as a post-Brexit future unfolds for the United Kingdom, within our Church and among our ecumenical brothers and sisters. Whatever division, dispute and discord there may be in present political life, our Christian faith calls us to embrace a Kingdom of unity, in which we build each other up, for the common good, through Christ's love.

As we near the end of Advent and once again prepare to celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus, we wish you a peaceful, blessed Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

+ Robert Gibraltar in Europe

The Rt Revd Dr Robert Innes  
Diocesan Bishop

+ David Hamid

The Rt Revd Dr David Hamid  
Suffragan Bishop

# Copenhagen Ecumenical Church Walk 2019

The great Ecumenical Church Walk 2019 took place on 17 January in Copenhagen to mark the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. This walk has taken place consecutively every year for over 70 years – the longest event of this kind in any city – and attracts over 800 participants each year.

The preacher this year was the Revd. Smitha Prasadam, the new Chaplain in Copenhagen (each year a different denomination is asked to provide a preacher). As you can see from the group



photo, the Diocese in Europe was very much present. In addition to Smitha, her mother, the Revd. Canon Jemima Prasadam and the Revd. Canon Ulla Monberg also participated.



We're already looking for great pictures for the Diocesan website and 2020 Annual Review...

PHOTO COMPETITION 2020

**Please send us a picture (taken at any time in 2019) that demonstrates how your church is responding to the challenges of environmental sustainability**

ENTRIES BY 31 JANUARY 2020



Please send your entry marked "Diocesan Photo Competition" to

[communications@europe.anglican.org](mailto:communications@europe.anglican.org)

# Travels with Bishop Robert in Turkey

*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 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



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

were invited to sit and chat in the monastery parlour, warmed by a roaring woodstove.

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 act 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 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!).

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



*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.*

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.

## From Flanders Fields to Young People in Europe Today

*Dr Clare Amos*

The Diocese in Europe has been a supporter of the Church of England's Ministry Experience Scheme (CEMES) since its inception five years ago. The Scheme offers young people (aged 18–30) who are seriously reflecting on a possible vocation to full time ministry in the Church of England the opportunity to spend nearly a year working in a chaplaincy in the diocese, along with a tailored

programme which offers educational and pastoral support. Because of the scattered nature of our diocese it is necessary and important to provide some opportunities throughout the year when the CEMES interns can meet together to share their experiences and to explore particular themes together. One such occasion has recently taken place, as the group of this year's six interns, met together in Belgium for two days, 17–19 March.

The first full day – 18 March – was spent visiting the town of Ypres and the memorials and cemeteries from the First World War which dominate the life of this small town in Flanders. The interns who formed the core of the group are of course very similar in age to those who are now buried in 'Flanders Fields'.

We are grateful to the Friends of St George's Ypres for suggesting we ask Professor Mark Connelly of the University of Kent at Canterbury to lead us during our visit to Ypres. Undoubtedly our visit to Ypres was 'made' for us through his presence as our immensely learned, yet also engaging and accessible, guide. Professor Connelly's presentation was thorough and illuminating – he explored with us in detail the Menin Gate, walked us to and through two cemeteries, one of which in particular (the Ramparts Cemetery) spoke to us of human dignity and beauty in the midst of such tragedy, pointed out to us key locations in the town, and in situ told the story of both the reconstruction of St Martin's Cathedral and of the building of St George's Church Ypres, where we ended our day.

Coincidentally just after we arrived at St George's the church bells began to be rung – in a long peal which was apparently due to last more than two hours. They felt an intriguing backcloth to the service of Evening Prayer that we said together in the church, which included a reading of Wilfred Owen's poem, 'Anthem for Doomed Youth'. Owen's poem includes the line, speaking about the 'doomed youth', 'No mockeries now for them; no prayers nor bells' so there was something very moving about our own praying in that context, accompanied by the church bells being rung out. It felt as though in some small way that the youth of the 21st century were helping by their prayers to mitigate the bitter experience of their forbears a hundred years ago. Owen spoke elsewhere of 'the pity of war' and I think we experienced some deep sense of such pity in our memorable day in Ypres.

The following day we gathered in Holy Trinity Belgium to 'unpack' our experiences and look at them in the light of the contemporary

context. We were privileged that Bishop Robert took the time to meet and speak with the group. He pointed out the line that could be drawn from what happened in Flanders Fields a century ago to the current realities of life in Europe.

The impetus for the beginning of the development of what is now the European Union began with the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community in the years after the Second World War which was formed partly to prevent future wars between the leading countries of continental Europe.

For all its many flaws the key achievement of

the European Union was that it had enabled peace in western Europe for more than 70 years – a period of peace that had never been experienced on the continent previously. It is an important message to hear today.

As the interns reflected on their feelings about the visit to Ypres we began to use the language of pilgrimage – and this will be the motif that the group will draw on the next time they meet together in June, when they will corporately address the Diocesan Synod in Cologne exploring how their internship year has been a ‘pilgrimage’ for them.



## 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.

## 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 15 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 7p.m. 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 10a.m. on Maundy Thursday, 18 April, by the visiting ringers, followed at 7p.m. 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.

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.

## Edith Cavell

The Diocese 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.

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

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>.



## 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 on their Facebook page.

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 29 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 30 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 30 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 ERMIC. 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.

## Italian Prime Minister Signs Treaty with Church of England

In March, we reported that 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.

A further major milestone has now been reached. On 30 July, at a prestigious ceremony held at the Palazzo Chigi in Rome, On. Giuseppe Conte, Prime Minister of Italy and The Revd. Canon Vickie Sims signed in full the Treaty ("Intesa") between the Italian Republic and the Association "Chiesa d'Inghilterra" which represents the Church

of England in Italy. The Prime Minister has agreed to present to the Italian Parliament the legislation to approve the Intesa. Parliamentary approval will be the final step in the process.



The Treaty ensures the full legal recognition of the chaplaincies and congregations in Italy. All the members of ACIDI, 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 of the Treaty are numerous and include:

- The full legal recognition by the Republic of Italy of the Confessione Anglicana of the Church of England;
- Anglican Chaplain access to the Italian clergy pension scheme;
- Permitting 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; and
- The possibility that 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 ACIDI 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 ceremony was attended by senior representatives of the Church of England, the British Government and the Italian Government: H.E. Jill Morris CMG, British Ambassador to the Republic of Italy and the Republic of San Marino and Board Member of ACIDI; H.E. Sally Axworthy MBE, British Ambassador to the Holy See and Board Member of ACIDI; Cons. Pietro Benassi, Diplomatic Advisor to Italy's Prime Minister; Dr. Paolo Coniglio, Secretary General and Board

Member of ACIDI; Prof. Francesco Pizzetti, former Chairman of the Interministerial Commission for treaties with the religious confessions; Cons. Anna Nardini, Research Officer and Institutional Affairs, Italy's Prime Minister; Prefect Giovanna Iurato, Department for Civil Freedom and Immigration at Italy's Interior Ministry; Dr. Gerardo Kaiser, Senior Political Analyst at the British Embassy in Rome. The signing ceremony featured in the leading Italian broadsheet *Corriere della Sera*.

## Bishop Robert – Anglican Communion Pilgrimage to the Holy Land

It was a great privilege for Helen and me to be invited by Archbishop Josiah Fearon, Secretary-General of the Anglican Communion, to join an 11 Day Pilgrimage to the Holy Land for Anglican Bishops and their spouses from across the world. The Pilgrimage was based at St. George's Cathedral Guest House in Jerusalem and the Convent of the Sisters of Nazareth in Nazareth. The theme of the Pilgrimage was 'Equipping the Church: living with differences.' The intention was that as bishops from very different cultures and traditions walked together in the places Jesus walked, so we would better understand one another and grow together.

Our Pilgrimage was led by Canon John Peterson, former Dean of St. George's College Jerusalem and former Secretary-General of the Anglican Communion, and a guide of extraordinary insight and specialist archaeological knowledge. Our daily reflections were led by The Reverend Philip Jackson, Vicar of Trinity Church, Wall Street, New York.

For 11 days, we walked together in the footsteps of Jesus. We visited Nazareth, where Mary heard she was to be the mother of God's Son, the cave at Bethlehem where he was born, the places around Galilee where he taught, and the Via Dolorosa in Jerusalem that he walked to his death. And by growing closer to the founder of our faith, we grew closer to each other.

No serious visit to the Holy Land should fail to engage with the present political reality of Israel and Palestine. Throughout our Pilgrimage, the sad and brutal divisions in the Holy Land thrust themselves upon us: the barbed wire, checkpoints and above all the wall that keeps Palestinians out of Israel proper. In the all-too-quiet town of Bethlehem we heard St. Paul's reminder to the Ephesians that 'Christ is himself our peace, who has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility.'

On our final day, we were extremely fortunate to be allowed into the Dome of the Rock at the heart of Jerusalem, where we listened to the very serious concerns of Muslim leaders in the city. We were reminded of the huge challenge of building peace in Jerusalem between Muslim, Christian and Jew, and of the impact on the peace of the whole world that relations in this city generate.

Our Holy Land Pilgrimage was an intensive and totally absorbing experience. It was very hot; our days often began shortly after 5a.m. and we worked into the evenings. Only a small number of us had English as our first language, and as most of us in the Diocese in Europe know, listening to and understanding people from very different countries and cultures requires patience and concentration.

In Jerusalem there were 30 of us together. We built strong bonds of fellowship across the things that divide us naturally and theologically.



Next year, at the Lambeth Conference, there will be some 600 or more. Our hope is that the 30 of us will provide at least one significant nucleus of shared understanding.

## Bishop Robert – Remembrance Sunday in Ljubljana



Modern day Slovenia is a small, well-developed nation sandwiched between Italy, Austria and Hungary and straddling alpine and Mediterranean climates. It is the only one of the former Yugoslavian nations to be in both Schengen and the Euro and prefers to think of itself as central European rather than Balkan.

The view from the medieval castle at the heart of Ljubljana takes in the red-roofed medieval centre, the Communist-era blocks behind them and the forests, hills and mountains in the distance. On an autumn Sunday it is a pleasant and peaceful view, with the loudest sound being the city's church bells.

But during the great wars of the twentieth century, the country that is now Slovenia witnessed terrible violence. In the First World War, more than a million Italians and nearly 700,000 of their opponents from the Austro-Hungarian empire lost their lives or were seriously injured in fighting in and around the Soca valley. Indeed, the small advances in territory and the huge casualties mirrored very much what was happening in Flanders, but with the added terror of extreme cold and avalanches. And in the Second World War the population suffered under fascist occupation, with the horror of mass roundups and killings. So Slovenia seemed a very appropriate place for a European bishop to spend Remembrance Sunday. Our Anglican congregation meets in this very handsome Evangelical Lutheran church building by kind permission of Bishop Geza Filo. The congregation has enjoyed something of a rebirth in recent months. The mainstays of the congregation had been growing older. But we have benefited

from the arrival of several families connected with the American Embassy. In particular, The Revd. Dr. Taylor Denyer, an ordained priest in the United Methodist Church, is kindly officiating under the ecumenical canons and building up the congregation through her pastoral care and her networks. What was once a predominantly elderly congregation enjoys the presence of young families with children.



In the picture, Barbara Ryder, who was for several years the Reader who looked after the congregation, together with The Reverend Taylor Denyer, prepare for holy communion. Martin Luther looks on approvingly (I like to think). After the service we shared some refreshments, including these poppy biscuits baked by one of the children.

In 2019, Remembrance Sunday is as important as it ever was. Conflict is a feature of the human condition. The stories of the countries and nations of modern Europe have been profoundly affected by warfare. If we are going to understand each other as peoples, we have to listen to each others' stories of conflicts, invasions, occupations, victories and defeats. Moreover, because war is so terrible, those caught up in it whether as soldiers or civilians are usually marked by it in the deepest way. For those of us who have had the good fortune not to be caught up in armed conflict ourselves, it remains a matter of Christian compassion and proper human respect to honour the experiences of veterans and victims, to hear and to value their stories. And to be humbled by them. *At the going down of the sun and in the morning, We will remember them.*



## Bishop David - St John Henry Newman: Uniting Roman Catholics and Anglicans

John Henry Newman, the key figure in the Oxford Movement in the Church of England who converted to Roman Catholicism in 1845, was canonised by Pope Francis in Rome. His conversion was highly controversial in the middle of the nineteenth century and at the time was felt by many to be a setback for the Oxford Movement itself. Nevertheless, we Anglicans owe much to Newman for his teaching and influence which restored to the Church of England a renewed understanding its rootedness in the Catholic Church of Christ.

I have a particular admiration for the way that Newman taught both Anglicans and Roman Catholics about how doctrine in the life of the Church can develop, through such doctrine being rooted implicitly in Holy Scripture, attested to by the Tradition of the Church (through Patristic and other theologians), and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit affirmed by the Church as a whole. It was remarkable in both Anglican and Roman Catholic theological circles of his day, that Newman underlined the active role of the lay faithful together with the ordained, in keeping and handing down the Apostolic Faith and leading the Church forward in understanding the truth of the Gospel.

The Saint's thought ended up having a major influence in the Second Vatican Council, which in its Constitution on Divine Revelation, *Dei Verbum* (which I consider to be one of the most important texts of Vatican II), states, "For there is a growth in the understanding of the realities and the words which have been handed down. This happens through the contemplation and study made by believers, who treasure these things in

their hearts (see Luke, 2:19, 51) through a penetrating understanding of the spiritual realities which they experience, and through the preaching of those who have received through Episcopal succession the sure gift of truth. For as the centuries succeed one another, the Church constantly moves forward toward the fullness of divine truth until the words of God reach their complete fulfillment in her." (*Dei Verbum* Para.8).

No wonder that HRH Prince Charles, who attended the canonisation then a reception hosted by the UK Embassy to the Holy See, encouraged us all, Anglicans and Roman Catholics, to celebrate St John Henry as a priest, poet but above all as a thinker ahead of his time. "One of the greatest theologians of the nineteenth century", is how Prince Charles described him.

The Diocese in Europe was well represented at the canonisation. Our Diocesan Registrar, Mr Aiden Hargreaves-Smith, the Revd Canon Matthew Harrison (formerly Chaplain of St George's Paris and the first occupant of the stall of John Henry Newman in the Pro-Cathedral in Valletta), and the Chaplain of All Saints, Rome, the Revd Robert Warren, joined me in the delegation. It was fitting for us to be present as our late Bishop Geoffrey Rowell was himself a Newman scholar, who shared with many of us in the diocese and beyond his esteem for the saint's enduring theological gifts to the whole Church of Christ. Bishop Geoffrey, I believe, was also influenced by John Henry Newman's approach to teaching as being not merely an academic and intellectual exercise to impart learning, but an engagement that involved pastoral care for the whole person as well. There were several other bishops, clergy and laity

from the Church of England and the Anglican Communion in attendance, where we were given privileged seats a few metres from His Holiness for the canonisation mass. Archbishop Ian Ernest, the new Director of the Anglican Centre in Rome, who has just arrived in the city, was greeted personally by the Pope, who momentarily stepped out of the entrance procession to speak to him.

As the Synod for the Pan Amazon region is still underway in Rome, there were also large numbers of bishops and faithful from that part of the world, including some of the indigenous peoples of Amazonia, with whom I had some conversation about their struggles, particularly environmental and human rights related, in their homelands.

When Newman preached his last sermon as a priest of the Church of England it was entitled, “The Parting of Friends”. Somehow at the canonisation we Anglicans felt reunited with our Roman Catholic friends. Perhaps St John Henry Newman should be the patron of ecumenism as some have suggested.

Here is St John Henry’s evening prayer, which is in Common Worship: Daily Prayer  
*Support us, O Lord, all the day long of this troublous life, until the shadows lengthen and the evening comes, the busy world is hushed, the fever of life is over and our work is done.  
 Then, Lord, in your mercy grant us a safe lodging, a holy rest, and peace at the last;  
 through Christ our Lord.*

## Bishop Robert – A Visit to St. Andrew’s, Moscow

I last visited St. Andrew’s Moscow two years ago, on that occasion in the company of Archbishop Justin. Much has happened in the intervening time: the building restoration project has begun; Malcolm Rogers is now well established in his ministry; and the church has grown significantly both in spiritual togetherness and in numbers. So I was very keen to return.

St. Andrew’s Moscow was used as a music recording studio during the Soviet era. It was restored to use as a Church following the visit of her Majesty the Queen to Moscow in the 1994. In 2016, the Church was granted a ‘free use’ agreement with the federal Ministry of Property and registration of title rights until 2065, the

maximum term allowed under Russian law. The British royal family has taken an active interest in the restoration of this church building, which is unique in Russia.

With the support of the Russian Orthodox Patriarchate, the church building has been included in the City of Moscow restoration programme. During my visit, I met with senior staff at the Mayor of Moscow’s office. This gave me opportunity to thank the City for its huge sponsorship of the restoration of the exterior of the church. Our meeting was extraordinarily warm and friendly. At its conclusion, the City agreed to set up a Working Group, bringing together the different parties in the project to help ensure good communication and the mutual understanding of deadlines.

The major structural works on the walls and foundations will run to millions of euros and take several years, but one smaller way in which the diocese has been able to give more immediate help is through the sponsorship of a kitchenette. My Advent Appeal in 2018 was towards providing this facility which will support the wonderful hospitality for which St. Andrew’s is known. I was invited to dedicate the new cooker, sinks and dishwashing equipment which are neatly built into a large meeting room adjacent to the church itself.

The Church of England’s relationship with the Russian Orthodox Church is very important to us. During my time in Moscow I met with Fr. Stephan Igumnov, Secretary for Inter-Christian Relations in the Patriarchate’s Department for External Church Relations. We discussed a number of areas of common interest including Syria, the Lambeth Conference and the World Council of Churches (on whose Central Committee we are both members). We looked for ways in which the momentum generated by Archbishop Justin’s visit in 2017 could be sustained.





There was space in the visit for some 'religious sight-seeing'. The British Embassy kindly provided a driver and car to take us an hour and a half out of the City to the Monastery of Sergiev Posad. The complex is part monastery, part theological seminary. To some extent this beautiful and ancient place is the spiritual heart of the whole country. The Orthodox church kindly offered us an expertly guided tour of the fascinating museum, which displays mainly Orthodox art and the various traditions of iconography in particular.

two candidates gave inspiring testimonies. The following day (St. Andrew's Day), the church was cleared to provide a splendid venue for the annual Advent bazaar. The church benefits from heating provided by the Moscow City heating system, so it was beautifully warm and cosy inside as the rain and sleet fell outside. In the background you can just see a military presence: the soldiers were on hand to provide tours of the historic tower (that has military significance owing to its role in the Bolshevik Revolution) and seemed to be enjoying the bazaar as much as everyone else.



It was a huge pleasure and inspiration to be with this flourishing Christian community, which is thriving under the wise pastoral leadership of Malcolm Rogers and his wife Alison. At its main Sunday service, this building is now full, and the question is starting to arise as to whether an additional service is needed. As well as regular worship, the building supports social outreach (particularly amongst those suffering from alcohol and substance abuse), houses a large youth work charity and provides a wonderful venue for concerts.

The main liturgical event of our visit was a Friday evening confirmation service. We had 12 confirmation candidates and 4 (already confirmed) candidates welcomed into the communion of the Church of England. All were adults and mainly younger adults. The candidates wrote accounts of why they wanted to take this big step, some of which were highly impressive. During the service,

The congregation is thoroughly international, and its work is evidently respected by the Russian Orthodox Church and the Moscow civic authorities alike. This is demanding ministry in a key location. I am thankful for all the sensitive and effective pastoral care that goes into building a city centre church like St. Andrew's. It really is a joy to behold.



## And finally... some other images from 2019

*The Revd Canon Paul Wignall (incoming Director of Reader Ministry)*

*The Revd Canon Elaine Labourel (outgoing Director of Reader Ministry)*

*A gathering of women clergy in Brussels*

*Brexit: deal, no deal?*

*Post-ordination training, Drongen Abbey, Belgium*

*Exploring Faith in Europe - weekly lectionary blog*

*Hestia Hellas - Bishop's Lent appeal, supporting the vulnerable in Greece*

*Save the Valletta skyline - St Paul's Anglican pro-cathedral in Malta restoration appeal*



Exploring faith  
in Europe

