



IRAQ: The Aid must Continue

The diocesan response to the appeal for aid in Iraq has been hailed as a great success.

A cheque for \$53,528 has been handed over to the Catholic Patriarch, Louis Raphael I Sako, by our priest in Baghdad, Fr Faiz Jerjees.

In Baghdad we have been working with an ecumenical Committee headed by the Patriarch, and this has helped ecumenical relations generally.

Fr Faiz reports that church life is continuing as normally as it ever can at St George's. The relief work is ongoing and the clinics and school are operating as usual.

Many congregation members have family in the north and have been personally affected because of that.



Fr Faiz Jerjees



Canon Andrew White

In the meantime Canon Andrew is continuing his fund and awareness-raising work in the USA, UK and elsewhere. For the moment, given his high profile, it is considered too high a security risk for him to be in Baghdad. Contributions continue to be needed.

In his Report to Standing Committee from the Gulf, Archdeacon Bill said that the Iraq appeal would probably need to continue for at least another year.

AUTUMN FORUMS "MAY CONTINUE"

Meetings have been held in Bahrain, Doha, Abu Dhabi and Cyprus on the theme 'Our Common Life'.

Delegates at Synod 2014 worried that planning was being rushed with insufficient prior consultation.

Standing Committee has agreed to look at the possibility of making the forums a regular part of diocesan decision-making.

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NEW LOOK SYNOD GETS GO-AHEAD

Synod 2015 is to have a makeover. Standing Committee agreed to draft proposals for a new style agenda at its October meeting in Larnaca.

- + Common Life Discussion Groups
- + Induction for new members
- + New-style Parish Reports
- + Fewer House meetings

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FAMAGUSTA'S NEW CHAPLAIN

Famagusta has a new lay student chaplain.

He's Harry Ching and he was licensed in September.

It is also hoped to make an appointment to the vacant position in Nicosia by the end of the year.

But financial constraints have stalled wider plans for a full-time ministry to ex-pat communities

Meet Harry Page 3

NEW-LOOK SYNOD OFFERS MORE TIME FOR CONSULTATION

Synod 2015 is to have a makeover. Standing Committee agreed to draft proposals for a new style agenda at its October meeting in Larnaca.



Some of the changes are due to the need to find space to continue the Common Life project.

At the strategic planning debate in 2014 there was concern about a lack of opportunity for wider discussion of proposals before they came to the point of decision. And so, next year there will be a series of discussion groups looking at some basic questions about what we understand our common life to both consist in and commit us to.

The results of these discussions will be fed into a final day plenary session, and any motion(s) to be put there will emerge from the discussions, - or so it is hoped.

There will also be a new induction session to help new members, both lay and clerical, to hit the ground running when Synod proper begins.

The Houses of Clergy and Laity will have just one Meeting each to consider their formal business, and some of the reports from groups will be included within the Report of Standing Committee. Spirituality and Ministry, both budgeted items, will continue to have Synod time.

The devotional input will be unaffected. This year's speaker is to be the Dean of St George's Jerusalem, the Very Revd Hosam Naoum.

Reports from the Chaplaincies / Parishes will also have a new form. In place of five minute videos from each place there will be one professionally produced 'round-up' video looking at aspects of diocesan life throughout the year. This may be augmented by other invited short contributions. In a year of great change it has not proved possible to produce enough material for a calendar this year, and it was felt that asking for videos might be too ambitious. Also members were said to be open to a new format for a part of Synod that was valued in principle, but not always entirely satisfying in practice.

AUTUMN FORUMS "MAY CONTINUE"

Standing Committee received reports from the Forums that have been held in Bahrain, Doha, Abu Dhabi and Cyprus. There has been much support for the principle of these Forums, the transparency they offer, the opportunity for wide discussion and the chance to set out financial plans and get responses in advance of Synod itself.

This year's Forums studied a paper entitled 'Our Common Life,' following a Synod 2014 debate about strategic planning that was said to be under resourced, rushed to Synod without sufficient consultation, and poorly understood. The Forums marked the beginning of a process that will eventually formalise our understandings in a new constitution.

Standing Committee was open to the idea that these Forums might become a regular feature of a progress towards diocesan decision-making.

NEW STUDENT CHAPLAIN “A PIECE IN THE JIGSAW”

But the others will have to wait...



Harry Ching

Archdeacon John presented a Report from Cyprus to Standing Committee in which he welcomed the appointment of Harry Ching as the new lay Student Chaplain in Famagusta.

Students from the Eastern Mediterranean University form the vast majority of the congregation at St Mark's Chaplaincy where Harry is based.

It had been hoped to appoint a full time Chaplain to oversee both the expat communities of Agia Napa and Famagusta areas, and this would have been an innovative, mission-oriented move. However it was proving to be financially unsupportable at the present time. So for now, only one piece of the jigsaw was in place.

In other reports the archdeacon mentioned the vacancy at St Paul's Nicosia. It was hoped to make an appointment before the end of the year.

The Cyprus Forum which had preceded the Meeting, and at which some members were present, had brought into public focus some concerns of the moment. Many of these were anxieties about finance. A plea for a sustained stewardship drive by Rev Canon Derek Smith had elicited applause.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE: Educated at Cheltenham College and the University of Kent, Harry was Chaplaincy Assistant at King's College London and subsequently Youth Officer at St John's Cathedral in Hong Kong. He is scheduled to complete his Master's programme at Ming Hua Theological College, Hong Kong. Bishop Michael licensed him as a Reader on Sunday 7 September in Famagusta. He will work initially under the local supervision of Canon Paul Maybury within the parish and chaplaincy of Ammochostos, South East Cyprus.

Clergy and Spouses Conference a Success

Bishop Michael said he had been proud of the diocesan contribution to the recent Clergy and Spouses Conference in Luxor, Egypt (pictured). A Report on the event concluded that this had been a great success in every way. The diocese had provided key administrative and other input. The conference was achieved actually under budget and included what was described as an ideal mix of study, educational visits and social networking time, alongside space for reflection and worship.

Next three Way Meeting in Thika

The next Three Way Meeting of the companion dioceses of Cyprus and the Gulf, Thika and Exeter will take place next October, Standing Committee was told. Decisions still need to be made about the diocesan representation, but it is hoped that we shall have around ten people altogether in our party. Those who have been to Thika in the past have all returned enthused and nourished by the experience.



AND FINALLY...FINANCE

The new Finance Officer, Evangelia Georgakaki, made her first Report to Standing Committee since her appointment in May.



Already there is much to say, and many savings have been made.

New auditors have been engaged, and a new in-house accounting system will take effect from the new year.

Payroll

The diocesan pay-roll will also be administered in-house from January, using a system that will make it possible for parishes, in Cyprus at least, to opt for a central payment of their cleric's stipend.

Legal

The Diocese is close to completing the work necessary for it to have legal status as a company in the Republic of Cyprus, which will bring us into line more fully with employment legislation, and have other advantages.

JEMT

Perhaps the most encouraging news, though, was that concerns we have had that JEMT might have been wrongly assessed for property tax for a number of years, have eventually been answered in our favour. We hope that this might result in a refund, and it certainly means a reduction in tax in the current year.

Canon John Banfield, Director of Finance for the Diocese, reported positive responses to the Draft Plan for 2015 that had been discussed in the Forums.

The shortfall in some parochial contributions to date, notably Dubai, had had its effect, as had the positive news from the Anglican centre in Doha that they would be able to more than cover the cost of the new full time Archdeacon in the Gulf.

Aden

Restructuring in Aden would save money but would not obviate the need for continued giving to that project.

Famagusta

If Synod were willing, one way to secure Harry Ching's position in Famagusta would be to designate that as a diocesan project. This was the only similar Student Chaplaincy in the diocese making potentially influential contact with young people who would be returning to other parts of the Anglican Communion.



Please remember in your prayers for the Ministry of the Church:

- Those currently in training for ordination: Kent Middleton, Chris Goldsmith, Geoff Graham and Charlie Lloyd-Evans.
- Those looking forward to the next Selection Conference to be held in March next year. Currently there are four candidates for consideration, and the new permanent Chair (Chris Butt) and Secretary (Elizabeth George) of the Conference.
- Our new Vocational Advisers as they begin work with those who feel God is calling them to be and do something new in the Church
- Members of the new Church Learning Group in Jebel Ali