

Presents at Christmas under the tree,
A red Christmas stocking waiting for me.

But what is Christmas? What is it about?
Just look in the Bible and you will find out!

It's about JESUS, the best present of all,
JESUS, our SAVIOUR,
God's gift to us all!

HAPPY
CHRISTMAS!

Make a stand up card
for Christmas

Glue the picture
and the stand
onto card,
colour in
then cut
out around
the edge.

Cut
along
the
slots
marked
A and B
on the
picture
and the
stand,
then
slot
together.

STAND

Happy Christmas

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December 2014 &
January 2015

DIOCESE IN EUROPE
THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND



Bishop Robert Innes' Christmas Message 2014

The nine lessons and carols service from King's College Cambridge is listened to by millions of people all over the world. It is one of England's most distinctive and successful religious exports! For me, the service has especial resonance, because this was the college where I studied as an undergraduate and so the distinctive sound of the treble voices and fulsome reed organ stops brings back happy memories of student life.

Eric Milner-White introduced the nine lessons and carol service in 1918. He had been appointed as Dean of King's at the age of 34. He developed the carol service because his experience as an army chaplain during the war had convinced him that the Church of England needed to introduce more imaginative worship. The nine lessons and carols format quickly became popular (indeed – how quickly do innovations become "traditions"!) and is today widely copied and imitated. In our European chaplaincies "the carol service" is now one of the best loved services in the whole year and delighted in by people of many different nationalities.

The beauty of our Christmas music has the ability to touch and soften the hearts of those who would not respond to a more prosaic declaration of Christian truth. But offering a delightful aesthetic experience is not enough. We long that people would encounter God! And if Milner-White were alive today, I am sure he would again be urging us always to be vigilant to the need imaginatively to portray the extraordinary story of the birth of the Saviour in a way that would impress upon its sceptical 21st century hearers the incomparable meekness and majesty, suffering and glory of the first Christmas.

We need again to feel the shocking reality of God becoming incarnate in conditions of extreme vulnerability and deprivation. For, as the evangelists tell us, God's Son was born in a feeding trough far from home as the first child of an unmarried, and presumably very scared young mother. From his birth he was hunted down by a mad and bad tyrant. Whilst still small, he and his parents were forced to migrate into neighbouring Egypt where I suppose they lived as refugees. I always find it striking that in Matthew's account of Christmas, the first half of chapter 2 which relates the adoration of the new-born King by the magi, is counter-balanced by the second half which graphically relates the attempts by the hostile powers of his day to end this would-be King's young life before it has scarcely begun.

2014 has been marked for many of us by commemorations of the outbreak of World War 1. It may be significant that Milner-White composed his carol service after war-time service both in Italy and on the Western Front. He certainly knew how to reclaim beauty from brokenness.

In our own time, we are massively aware of the tragedy of war. It is reckoned that about 14 million people have been displaced by the conflicts in Syria and Iraq. In Lebanon, one in four of the population is now a refugee. We Christians, whose Saviour began life as a refugee, have particular responsibilities to do what we can to help and to urge our governments to act together to provide aid. And we pray earnestly for those many men, women and children who face a winter without adequate food or shelter.

It is in this sobering international context that this Christmas we celebrate in word and in song the great and wonderful mystery of the incarnation, the enfleshment, of God's Son.

I am very aware that the Christmas season puts particular opportunities and pressures in the way of our chaplaincies. We are typically receiving lots of visitors who don't normally darken the doors of our churches. At the same time, many regular church members are away at Christmas itself, visiting family or friends. So those that remain have to work especially hard to keep everything running and to provide a cheerful welcome.

*Ring out old shapes of foul disease,
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.*

*Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.*

*Alfred, Lord Tennyson
(1809-1892)*

Alfred, Lord Tennyson, was born in Lincolnshire, England, the fourth of 12 children. Tutored in classical and modern languages by his father, the Revd George Tennyson, he left home in 1827 to attend Trinity College, Cambridge, and in the same year published a book of poems together with his brother Charles. At university he became close friends with Arthur Hallam, leader of an undergraduate literary club. On the death of his father in 1831, Tennyson broke off his studies to return home to share in family responsibilities. Hallam came to stay and became engaged to the poet's sister Emilia, but died from a brain haemorrhage before they could marry. Tennyson was deeply affected by the early death of his friend and this poem is part of the long elegy *In Memoriam* dedicated to Hallam. It was published in 1850, and later the same year he was appointed Poet Laureate, a position he held until his death in 1892. A well-loved Victorian poet, a number of phrases from his work have become embedded in the English language, such as "*Nature, red in tooth and claw*", "*'Tis better to have loved and lost / Than never to have loved at all*", "*Theirs not to reason why, / Theirs but to do and die*".

Ring Out, Wild Bells

*Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.*

*Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.*

*Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
For those that here we see no more,
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.*

*Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife;
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.*

*Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
The faithless coldness of the times;
Ring out, ring out thy mournful rhymes,
But ring the fuller minstrel in.*

*Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.*

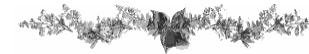
Whether we have the resources of a great church or cathedral or something far more modest, it is the authenticity of what we do and the warmth of our welcome that makes the biggest impact. So to all those who sustain and enable our worship over Christmas I give my warm and sincere thanks: to our clergy, lay readers and leaders, musicians, welcomers, wardens, caterers and cleaners.

And may the God whose message of peace was sung by the angels to herald the birth of his Son, bring his peace to our hearts, our homes, our families and our world over this Christmas time.

+ Robert - Gibraltar in Europe

The **Bishop in Europe** (full title: Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe) is the ordinary of the Church of England's Diocese in Europe in the Province of Canterbury. One of the archdeaconries is the Archdeaconry of Northwest Europe, consisting of Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands (see the map in the Hut), to which St Mary's belongs.

(Received with thanks from Carla Koomen)



Sad News

After our church service on Sunday, 16th November, our Chaplain Alja heard that her mother, who had been ill for some time, had taken a turn for the worse, and she died shortly after that.

We are keeping Alja and her family in our prayers
at this difficult time.



Twente News

Interview with 101-year-old Hattie Mae MacDonald of Feague, Kentucky

Reporter: Can you give us some health tips for reaching the age of 101?

Hattie: For better digestion I drink beer. In the case of appetite loss I drink white wine. For low blood pressure I drink red wine. In the case of high blood pressure I drink scotch. And when I have a cold I drink Schnapps.
Reporter: When do you drink water?



Hattie: I've never been that sick.

A day without sunshine is like ... well ... night.

Sale of Stephanie's Books

Recently, the Floral Guild held an impromptu sale of books donated by Joop Prins. Joop's wife, Stephanie, passed away recently and this was a collection of her personal books. There were several boxes (novels, inspirational, humour, travel, history, etc.). After three Sundays, the total

sold brought in €51.48. The few books that were left over were taken by Nicole & Marco Zonnebeld to go to the Crossing Borders project. A lovely small quilt (made for a tablecloth or throw) was valued at €25 by Theda ten Barge. This large amount was given to St Mary's general fund. Altogether that makes €76.48 donated to St Mary's, thanks to the Prins family.

Stephanie was such a gentle, warm and caring person. Very much missed by her friends. We appreciate the opportunity to have something tangible that was hers to hold in our hands. As part of St Mary's Quilters, she also had a hand in the two quilted panels hanging in the back of our church.

Linda ten Berge

Christmas Market

As can be seen in the Forthcoming Services section, a traditional Christmas service of Nine Lessons and Carols will be held in St Mary's Chapel on Sunday, 14th December. This will be followed by a small Christmas Fair, where stalls will be stocked with mince pies, chutneys and marmalades, Christmas cakes and seasonal gifts.

Key Dates

8th January 2015 Council Meeting

5th September 2015 Castle Fair



replied, "and her daughter Marcy."

"Shirley Goodnest? Who is she and why is she following us?" "Well," Timmy explained, "every night my Mum makes me say the 23rd Psalm with my prayers, 'coz she worries about me so much. And in the Psalm, it says, 'Shirley Goodnest and Marcy shall follow me all the days of my life', so I guess I'll just have to get used to it!"

Submitted by Brenda Pyle

Prayer for Christmas Presence



Generous Father,

At this busy time of year, help us to remember the important things. In all the rush of sending cards and giving presents may we make time to be still, to acknowledge your sending and giving of the greatest gift of all, Jesus. Thank you that he didn't stay in the stable in Bethlehem, but lived and died and became the Saviour of all who put their trust in him. May we receive afresh the gift of your presence with us in Jesus, now and for ever, with great thankfulness. In his name, we pray. Amen.

By Daphne Kitching



December

December, December,
A month to remember,
A month full of darkness and light,
A month full of rushing
And sharing and hoping,
A month full of one special night.

By Daphne Kitching



The Bible was the only book Jesus ever quoted, and then never as a basis for discussion but to decide the point at issue.

— Leon Morris

Raised

I didn't just grow up. I was taught when I enter a room. Say "please" and "thank you", to have respect for my elders and to get up off my lazy butt and let the elder in the room have my chair. Say "yes sir" and "no sir", lend a helping hand to those in need. Hold the door for the person behind me, say "excuse me" when it's needed and to love people *for who they are* and not for *what I can get from them*. I was also taught to treat people the way I want to be treated.

Submitted by
Brenda Pyle



Silence: the art of conversation most appreciated when the Christmas Day feature film is on.
– W Hazlitt
(paraphrased)

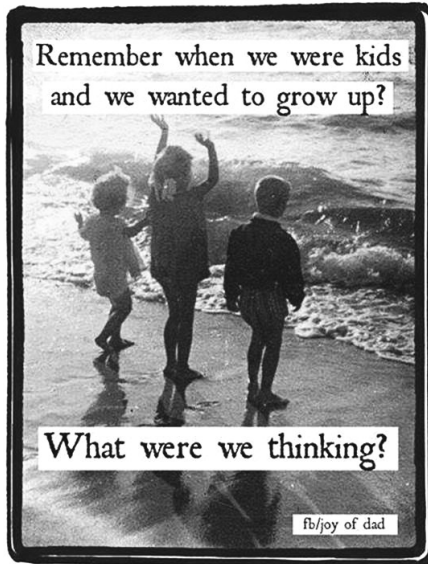
Shirley & Marcy

A mother was concerned about her kindergarten son walking to school. He didn't want his mother to walk with him anymore. She wanted to give him the feeling that he had some independence but yet know that he was safe. Then she had an idea of how to handle it.

She asked a neighbour if she would please follow him to school in the mornings, staying at a distance, so he probably wouldn't notice her. The neighbour said that, since she was up early with her toddler anyway, it would be a good way for them to get some exercise as well, so she agreed.

The next school day, the neighbour and her little girl set out following behind Timmy as he walked to school with another neighbour's girl he knew. She did this for the whole week. As the two kids walked and chatted, kicking stones and twigs, Timmy's little friend noticed the same lady was following them as she seemed to do every day all week. Finally she said to Timmy "Have you noticed that lady following us to school all week? Do you know her?"

Timmy nonchalantly replied, "Yeah, I know who she is." The little girl said, "Well, who is she then?" "That's just Shirley Goodnest," Timmy



 * As this is the last issue of 2014, *
 * may we wish you, *
 * our readers and contributors, *
 * all the peace and joy of this blessed *
 * season and a happy and healthy *
 * New Year. *



No caption required!



Intercessions

If you wish to have someone included in the intercession, please contact the Chaplain or one of the Churchwardens before the Service.

If you know of anyone who is sick or in need of pastoral care, please contact the Chaplain or one of the Churchwardens.

Salary Disparity

A mechanic was removing a cylinder-head from a Harley motorcycle when he spotted a well-known cardiologist in his shop, waiting for the service manager to check out his bike. The mechanic shouted out, "Hey, Doc, want to take a look at this?" The cardiologist, a bit surprised, walked over. The mechanic straightened up, wiped his hands on a rag and asked, "So Doc, look at this engine. I open its heart, take the valves out, repair any damage, and then put them back in. When I finish, it works just like new. So how come I make a modest \$39,675 a year and you get the really big bucks, when basically we're doing the same work?"

The cardiologist paused, smiled, then leaned over and whispered ... "Try doing it with the engine running."

Contributed by
Christiaan Koning

Archdeaconry Synod Report (Part 2)

By Simone Yallop



This report follows on from the first part of the Archdeaconry Synod Report given by Joyce Wigboldus in the November 2014 issue of the magazine. The Archdeaconry Synod is a gathering of clergy and lay representatives from all the Anglican chaplaincies in the Archdeaconry of North West Europe, which covers the Benelux countries, being the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg. Our archdeaconry is one of the seven archdeaconries of the Diocese in Europe. The Archdeaconry Synod began on Thursday 2nd October at 16:00 and lasted until about 13:30 on Saturday 4th October. It was held in the Oude Abdij van Drogen near Gent in Belgium. Our Chaplain Alja Tollefsen attended, as well as Joyce Wigboldus and myself as Archdeaconry Representatives. The report from Joyce covers the events of the Thursday and Friday and my report covers the events of the Saturday.

The Saturday began with a service of Morning Prayer in the chapel led by the Area Dean, the Revd Canon Mark Collinson from Amsterdam. After breakfast it was time for the Business Meeting. Again this year I was asked by the Archdeacon to take the minutes of the Business Meeting. The meeting was chaired by Lay Canon Mrs Ann Turner. The meeting followed the usual pattern and was opened by the Archdeacon, the agenda was approved, and my minutes of last year were accepted. There were no matters arising from the minutes because, as the Chair explained, some of the areas of last year's meeting could not be revisited. Last year there was a question-and-answer session with Bishop Geoffrey, who has now retired, so it was not possible or appropriate to revisit that. Also the Standing Committee had addressed the issues raised last year about Synod and had made appropriate changes to the programme for this year. Last year during the Business Meeting there had been discussion regarding the review of the Luweero twinning arrangement. This was addressed in the sessions on the Thursday and Friday of this Synod, as you can read in Joyce's report. Therefore this was not further discussed in the Business Meeting other than to say that this has been dealt with well and we

Embrace all equally!

Have lunch with God ... bring potato chips!



Prayer is one of the best gifts we receive.
There is no cost but a lot of rewards.

Father, I ask You to bless my friends, relatives and e-mail buddies. Show them a new revelation of Your love and power. Holy Spirit, I ask You to minister to their spirit at this very moment. Where there is pain, give them Your peace and mercy. Where there is self-doubt, release a renewed confidence through Your grace. Bless their homes, families, finances, their goings and their comings.

In Jesus' precious name, Amen.

Submitted by Christiaan Koning

Rudolph Turns 75



Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer is younger than you might think. He did not come on the Christmas scene until 1st December 1939. His first appearance was in a children's colouring book by Robert May and given away by Montgomery Ward stores in the USA. The illustrator had to fight for him because the store owners were worried that the red nose might be associated with drunkenness. The story of Rudolph is one of triumph over adversity: Rudolph, initially scorned by his fellow-reindeers, was chosen by Santa to haul the sleigh because his nose lit the way on a dark night. The story was so appealing that it spawned a hit song, written by Johnny Marks, brother-in-law of Rudolph's creator, which sold 25 million copies.

Preachers have found elements of discrimination, epiphany, redemption and mercy in Rudolph's story. Dutch scientists in 2012 found reindeers do have red noses, or at least a dense network of blood vessels which "help to protect them from freezing and to regulate the temperature of the reindeer's brain – factors essential for flying reindeer pulling a sleigh under extreme temperatures!"

Source: Parish Pump December 2014

Prayer and Potato Chips

A little boy wanted to meet God. He knew it was a long trip to where God lived, so he packed his suitcase with a bag of potato chips and a six-pack of root beer and started his journey. When he had gone about three blocks, he met an old man. He was sitting in the park, just staring at some pigeons. The boy sat down next to him and opened his suitcase. He was about to take a drink from his root beer when he noticed that the old man looked hungry, so he offered him some chips. The old man gratefully accepted and smiled at him.

His smile was so warm and friendly that the boy wanted to see it again, so he offered him a root beer. Again, the old man smiled at him. The boy was delighted! They sat there all afternoon eating and smiling, but they never said a word.

As twilight approached, the boy realized how tired he was and he got up to leave; but before he had gone more than a few steps, he turned around, ran back to the old man, and gave him a hug. The old man gave him his biggest smile ever.

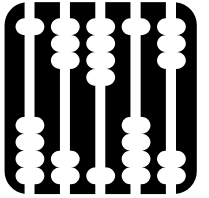
When the boy opened the door to his own house a short time later, his mother was surprised by the look of joy on his face. She asked him, "What did you do today that made you so happy?" He replied, "I had lunch with God." And before his mother could respond, he added, "You know what? He's got the most beautiful smile I've ever seen!"

Meanwhile, the old man, also radiant with joy, returned to his home. His son was stunned by the look of peace on his face and he asked, "Dad, what did you do today that made you so happy?" His father replied "I ate potato chips in the park with God." However, before his son could respond, he added, "You know, he's much younger than I expected."

Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around. People come into our lives for a reason, a season, or a lifetime!

now have a way of moving forward. This way forward is the establishment of a Twinning Oversight Group (TOG) for North West Europe with three members who will address the recommendations of the 2014 review report.

The Chair then handed over to the Treasurer, Mr David Sayers, for the financial part of the meeting. With 2014 being an election year for Archdeaconry Representatives there were a lot of new members at Synod this year. For their benefit the Treasurer gave a short explanation of his tasks in the Archdeaconry. Starting with this meeting the Treasurer has to present a Common Fund budget figure for acceptance at Synod. Once agreed a share is calculated for each chaplaincy based on the quotas calculated at the Diocesan Office in London. The Treasurer then has to collect this money from each chaplaincy, together with the CME (Continuing Ministerial Education) contribution. Then the Treasurer has to pay the bills that come in, pay the CME grants that the Archdeacon instructs him to pay, he does the book keeping, he has the accounts examined by a third party to make sure they are correct, he makes reports to the Standing Committee and to this Synod and then the process starts all over again. To give an idea of the numbers, the Common Fund budget, over the past few years, has been €15,000. The CME contribution is calculated at €225 per clergy head and €150 per lay reader head in each chaplaincy. The CME contribution is about €7,500 per year coming in. About €4,000 per year is paid out in CME grants. That means that each year the size of the CME fund continues to grow and currently stands at €31,500. The money is also used to fund the conferences that are held in Cologne, costing about €12,000. This Synod costs about €13,500 and at the end of this year there will probably be €32,000 of net assets in the bank account.



During the Business Meeting there were a number of questions raised about the CME fund and how it should be used. The questions were answered by the Archdeacon, the Treasurer and the Chair. CME is part of the clergy terms and conditions of service, therefore it is not possible to reduce the contribution that has to be made by the chaplaincies. Applications for CME grants can be made to the Archdeacon by clergy and readers. The Archdeacon considers each

application carefully and may ask a number of questions before approving the application. A proposal was made from the floor for the Standing Committee to look at the amount in the CME fund and set an annual figure that can be applied for by clergy and readers. This proposal was put to the vote. There were 12 in favour, 25 against and 8 abstentions so the proposal was defeated. The Treasurer proposed that the Common Fund budget figure would be set again this year to €15,000. A vote was taken. There were 51 in favour, 0 against and 1 abstention. The motion was carried and the Treasurer was given a mandate to carry on. At the end of the discussion on finance, a request was made from the floor to look into ways of using some of the large amount of money in the CME fund for training of the laity.

The next item on the agenda was for the Archdeacon to give some information about the Bishop's Office. The Archdeacon said that on May 6th 2014 we learned that Canon Robert Innes was to be our new diocesan bishop and that his office would be located for the first time within the geographical territory of our diocese. This has led to a number of changes. Firstly, the previous Bishop's Office in Worth, West Sussex, is now closed. The office staff have moved to new posts. Secondly, Bishop Robert is now installed in the new office in Brussels (47, rue Capitaine Crespel - boite 49, 1050 Brussels, Belgium). Bishop Robert's Personal Assistant is Mrs Vela Palim and the contact details are on the diocesan website. The Brussels office will be Bishop Robert's main base and is where he will usually see people and for people to meet with him. Thirdly, the bishop has a second base in Church House, Westminster, the Church of England's headquarters in London. He will travel to London to meet with staff in the Diocesan Office and he will be able to meet people there. Fourthly, what about the Bishop's Chaplain, who is also the Acting Archdeacon of North West Europe? The Archdeacon said that for the moment, as far as where he lives is concerned, there is no change and he is continuing to live in the Chaplain's House in Sussex. With the range of IT options now available Bishop Robert and his Chaplain can keep in very close touch. The Archdeacon said he travels to Brussels regularly and he meets the bishop in Brussels or London or wherever they happen to be. This arrangement is sustainable for the medium term but is not viable for the long term. The

that never detracted from the great output of paintings he produced up to his death in 1679. He excelled in telling a story through his canvases, and this painting is one of six he produced on the popular Dutch feast of St Nicholas. It is celebrated on 6th December and the traditions and customs have changed little over the years.

During the night before, St Nicholas rides across the rooftops on his white horse with his faithful servant, dropping gifts and sweets down the chimneys into waiting shoes. The horse enjoys the carrots and hay left out in each household. If some children have not been good, then a birch rod awaits them in their shoes when they wake up the following day.

That morning scene is the theme of this painting of 1663. The family has gathered to see what treats have been left, and Jan Steen may very well have portrayed his own family, as we know he had six children. The little girl has received a doll and enough sweets to fill a pail. Two boys on the right are looking up the chimney, and one holds the baby who is clutching a gingerbread St Nicholas. The boy stood by his mother is pointing a finger at his crying brother, while the maid has the birch switch left in his shoe. Tears and sadness threaten to dampen the happiness of everyone else. And then we spy at the back of the room grandmother beckoning to the crying boy. She will find him a treat behind the curtains to brighten his day after all.

Presents and sweets bring happiness to all the family on this feast of St Nicholas as they do on Christmas Day. The generosity of giving and sharing is caught beautifully by Jan Steen. As we look on, we suddenly focus on that little doll held by the girl. It is St John the Baptist – the forerunner of Jesus. Our thoughts go from this family to the Holy Family, and to the birth of the Babe of Bethlehem. In the long dark nights of December and in what the Dutch call "the cold St Nicholas weather" we shall gather as families and churches to find that same generosity and love in the Christmas gift of the new-born babe who brightens up our lives and homes.

© *The Revd Michael Burgess*



... in the variety show the Dutch melodramatic choral art clearly hit a lively note.

... an alcohol-free but visibly intoxicated lady endeavoured to find an escort.

... on the last evening a group photo almost failed to materialize, because one or two were always missing, who were then being sought by others and

... a pilgrim held the banner so high that a few other pilgrims faced the threat of appearing headless on the photo,

... but fortunately the photo was taken just before it became too dark or someone was actually frozen to death.

... the entire staff of the Iona Community walked with us to the ferry and waved us off.



God in the Arts

“He gave us eyes to see them”: *The Feast of St Nicholas* by Jan Steen

“I can’t wait for Christmas. I count the days, hours and even minutes. And when it comes a tingly feeling comes all over me. Even the word Christmas makes me feel different inside.” Those are some words of a little boy called Iain Whittaker, and they remind us how Christmas is particularly the time for children and families.

Children, somehow, in their innocence and enthusiasm, capture the mystery and the excitement of the season. It is the theme of our final visit to the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. During this year we have explored some of the remarkable treasures in this building which span the centuries of art and sculpture. On the first floor we find Rembrandt and Vermeer, the great artists of the Dutch Golden Age. We also find this month’s work, *The Feast of St Nicholas* by Jan Steen.

He was born in Leyden in 1626, the son of a Roman Catholic brewer. Jan Steen worked as a brewer and innkeeper himself, but



Archdeacon said that as soon as there is any change or development he will let us know. (The postal address for the Archdeacon is the address of the Brussels office given above.)

The Archdeacon then went on to talk about Bishop Robert’s plans to meet the people. The Archdeacon said Bishop Robert is keen to get to know the diocese. He has hit the ground running and is keen to get to know the clergy and the people who worship in our churches and chaplaincies. He is keen to see the diverse approaches to mission throughout the diocese. He wants to be an affirming presence and a real source of support and encouragement. He does expect to receive invites to the chaplaincies but not all at once. He wants to come to preach the Gospel and to administer the sacraments of the church. Also he wants to engage with questions on the ground, so when he comes to visit it would be good for him to spend some time with the church council, perhaps to meet with local ecumenical representatives and then of course to have a celebration of confirmation or confirmation with baptism, usually in a Sunday morning service. (In our case at St Mary’s that is going to happen very soon on 7th December.) Since Bishop Robert was previously chaplain in Brussels he knows what ministry in the Diocese in Europe is all about. The Archdeacon said that Bishop Robert knows the church here well. He knows of our great hopes and aspirations for the church of God. The Archdeacon asked us to pray for the diocese and for Bishop Robert that under God we go from strength to strength.

There were no further items under any other business. The Chair informed the meeting that the Archdeaconry Synod will be held next time again at the Oude Abdij in Drongen and since it has to be booked two years in advance the new dates are 8th to 10th October 2015 and 13th to 15th October 2016.

The Business Meeting was finished sooner than expected so the AGM of the Anglican Council in the Netherlands (ACNL) was brought forward from the afternoon. It started directly after the Business Meeting. The meeting was chaired by the Area Dean, who explained that the ACNL was formed in 2010 in order for us to have a legal identity in the Netherlands. This allows us to operate under the legal and fiscal regulations in this country. Also it enables us to relate as a

single body to the national churches and to the Dutch government. This is a relatively new development in the life of the Archdeaconry. At the meeting the reports from the ACNL Executive Committee were presented and accepted. The ACNL Executive Committee members include Revd Canon Mark Collinson (Chair), Ms Sandra Sue (Treasurer), Revd Sam Van Leer (Secretary) and Mr Jan de Beij (CIO representative). The ACNL has been doing a lot of work in legal registration. Jan de Beij goes to meetings of the CIO (Interkerkelijk Contact in Overheidszaken), which is the body through which the churches in the Netherlands communicate with the government. Sam Van Leer is the representative on the national council of churches and is also on their standing committee representing the Episcopal churches. The ACNL has been developing communications and has as website www.anglican.nl, which has links to the websites of all the Anglican chaplaincies in the Netherlands. Sandra Sue manages the finances of the ACNL. The contributions for the ACNL are collected from the chaplaincies by the Treasurer of the Archdeaconry and are passed on to the Treasurer of the ACNL. As mentioned last year the ACNL are still looking for people to help in the areas of personnel and communications. The ACNL meets about four times a year, during the day, in Utrecht. The Area Dean drew attention to the part of the ACNL annual report that contains guidelines for tax-efficient giving for Dutch tax payers.

The ACNL meeting was followed by the Synod Eucharist, with the Archdeacon as Celebrant and Preacher. The service was conducted partly in English and partly in Dutch. The Archdeaconry Synod finished after lunch on the Saturday afternoon. It had been a very interesting Synod, which I enjoyed attending.



All arts proceed from God and ought to be held
as divine inventions.
– *John Calvin*

... many Dutch pilgrims were converted to porridge for breakfast.
... each time the grace came as a surprise, complete with a good dose of humour.
... many household chores needed the willing dedication of the pilgrims to achieve an exceptionally clean building and excellent meals, but
... tools were immediately downed to be in church for the three daily services.
... Everyone was extremely happy with the beautiful music and inspirational texts.
... Everhard demonstrated a remarkable talent for the occasionally complex task of allotting sleeping quarters.
... That thanks to skillful leadership the artistic expressions of some pilgrims led to splendid results.
... a common room with an open fire encouraged English/Swedish conversations until deep in the night.
... a basket with scraps of knitting to be finished off for the third world stood ready and waiting, but preference was given to knitting baby things brought from home.
... even after two days on the coffee table the homemade scones turned out to be still delicious.
... the unpredictable behaviour of the sheep grazing round the Abbey and the twists and turns of the dolphins in the bay were a pleasant aspect of animal life on Iona – certainly not forgetting to mention the antics of the otters, the seals and the puffins.
... a trek of over 14 kilometres undertaken by nearly all the pilgrims showed that even on a small island walking had plenty to offer.
... stones had a dominant function in the Iona experience, such as giving them away, exchanging them, throwing them away and again collecting them,
... the luggage on the return journey weighed considerably more,
... but that could also be caused by the books, music collections and souvenirs of that kind that had been bought.
... one of the pilgrims in search of the drying room got lost, and after going upstairs, downstairs and in every nook or cranny finally ended up on known territory back in the church.
... during the ceilidh (folk dance evening) the instructions, though clear and concise, led within a few short bars to collisions and chaos of various forms.
... everyone had the greatest fun.

IONA Observations

By Erica Bonting-
Schotman

We Noticed That ...



... Everhard had some problem in counting to 13,
... because one of the pilgrims quite regularly went missing during the journey.
... and this pilgrim couldn't find the others, which prompted a bus-driver to remark that a group of 12 people couldn't actually remain invisible for long.
... one of pilgrims managed to attract the attention of the far from ugly customs officers, but in so doing was relieved of a few tubes and bottles.
... during the three-hour train ride from Glasgow to Oban between naps puzzles were the name of the game, punctuated by bursts of raucous laughter.
... in Oban the heating worked overtime ... but not in the showers!
... the lobster may well have been served rather cold, but it was certainly lovely and fresh.
... the rolls filled with fish in the harbour of Oban were in great demand.
... after the long hot bus journey across the island of Mull, the pilgrims were heartened to see Iona Abbey on the green island on the other side of the bay.
... into the home straight of the journey the sight of verges filled with wild roses and fuchsias lightened footsteps along a quaint country road
... we were welcomed with tea and homemade oatmeal/peanut biscuits.
... our spiritual leader at the opening and likewise the closing gathering was temporarily relieved of her pastoral duties and
... we're afraid that that might be the reason for her choosing to take on the humble household chores as bathroom and toilet cleaner.

Visit Bishop Robert, Confirmation and Unveiling



When you read this, four members of the Bestman family, Jolanda, Maria, John and Matthijs, and Fred Schonewille will have been confirmed into the Church of England. We congratulate them and are happy to welcome them in our midst as full members.

We will also have witnessed a beautiful service led by the Rt Revd Robert Innes, Bishop of the Diocese in Europe. We really appreciate that he found the time to visit us so early in his new job.

And finally, in that same service a diptych by wood sculptor Bert Kersten of Rotterdam was unveiled by Bishop Robert. The two wood panels are on the back wall on either side of the bell rope. The central figure is the Virgin Mary, around whom various scenes with biblical connotations are depicted. The figures are contemporary, often of African origin.

We are extremely fortunate to have received such a gift, which greatly adds to the beauty of the chapel. It was wonderful that Bert and his wife Liesbeth took the trouble to be present for the occasion.

Everhard Ottens



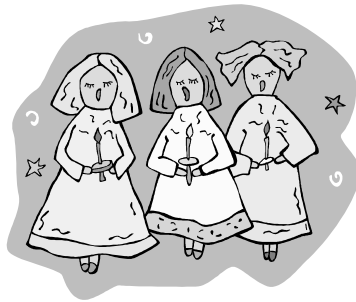
New Employee

Alan, a new retiree-greeter at Wal-Mart, just couldn't seem to get to work on time. Every day he was 5, 10, 15 minutes late. But he was a good worker, really tidy, clean-shaven, sharp-minded, and a real credit to the company and obviously demonstrating their Older Person-Friendly policies.



One day the boss called him into the office for a talk. "Alan, I have to tell you, I like your work ethic; you do a bang-up job when you finally get here; but your being late so often is quite bothersome." "Yes, I know boss, and I am working on it." "Well good, you are a team player.

St James the Least of All On Why Carol Services Are So Dangerous



My dear Nephew
Darren

So: you are excited about being invited to plan your first Carol Service. The dangers involved are only slightly less than being invited to judge the best cake made by the Ladies' Group. You seem to have no idea of the lifelong offence you will inevitably cause. In decades to come when you will either be a seasoned old clergyman – or more likely a double glazing salesman – you will be remembered as "the curate who offended Mrs Smith."

First, you have to decide which groups are going to be represented to give the readings. If the Brownies were asked last year, then it has to be the Cubs this time. But don't forget that every third year, the Boys' Brigade must be asked, or they will take their revenge and get their flag tangled in the nave chandelier come Remembrance Sunday. If someone represents the choir, then over a four-year period all four voice parts must be called on – and if the organist isn't asked on the fifth year, then all hymns subsequently will be played at double speed and with one verse missing. Should one person have been invited to read for two successive years, then their annual appearance thereafter will be taken as an inalienable right for the rest of their lifetime – and probably longer than that. To drop them may well invoke legal proceedings,

some panic started to set in. The grace of God was with me and I soon knew this was how it was to be: my Spirit was crying out for God. The silence was replaced with a loneliness. My vessel was being emptied, and the more lonely I felt, the emptier the vessel became. All of this brought much pain but, joy of joys, the empty vessel was soon filled to the brim with the Holy Spirit and my spirit sang out!

Now what has this to do with Iona? Well to be at Iona was again another form of retreat (from the ordinary world we live in) and, like every retreat I go on, the feeling of loneliness emerges. I can't stop it! And of course there is that pain again!

Now, going in a group of people, all friends, and then to be sharing a room with my husband, one might think that loneliness might be out of the question.

No, there were times when the dreaded loneliness did emerge. As I reflect upon this I see that it is really my spirit calling out, a yearning to be re-connected with the Lord. Loneliness gives me the opportunity to do so.

When I choose to take myself away from my ordinary life – all of its demands, all of the commitments, all of the social engagements, all of the hobbies to pursue – then loneliness will be felt because I am stepping out of my comfort zone. I realize, though, that in so doing I am really listening to my soul, which needs to be fed and nourished. In this state, which first begins with loneliness, followed by courage and a gentle calling out to the Lord, I know I will be heard. The Father gently takes my hand and guides me to the edge and shows me the next steps in my journey towards Him. I can be free.

My journey to Iona island, with its majesty and glory in its nature and remoteness, has blown the Spirit in my direction and my soul is taking courage.



IONA –

A Journey Within

By Pauline Talstra



Coming back from Iona island after spending one week in community living, one would hope to be able to formulate some semblance of meaning from the whole experience. Of course that is what I attempt to do now.

In the past three to four weeks, words, reflections, encounters, etc. etc. keep floating through my head. All individual experiences of a wonderful week on Iona island.

And still it is difficult to start.

Perhaps with one word ... *Loneliness*.

This is the word that I heard quite often during the week. It came from the mouth of Alistair McIntosh, who talked about it in his lectures. The first time I heard him say it, in the context of his own loneliness, my spirit jumped for joy. I recognized exactly what he was saying. He was declaring it out loud and I knew that feeling, but it was something I was not about to share ... that is until now!

When I first came to Holland I visited Chevetogne Monastery in Belgium. I wanted to continue with my annual retreats, in fact "guided" retreats similar to those that I had been doing in Australia. But all was different. There were no "guides" for me at Chevetogne. I found myself totally alone and as a consequence

Then there is the batting order to be considered. Someone from the church council will take it as a deliberate slight if they are placed lower in the order than a representative of the Men's Fellowship and no self-respecting bell ringer would voluntarily follow a brass cleaner.

If you do not specify where they should read from and how the readings should end, then a form of ecclesiastical inflation will happen. If the first reader speaks from the chancel step, the next one will go to the lectern; after the sanctuary and pulpit have been utilized, the final reader will probably ask you to move so he can take your place. The variations on "Here endeth", "This is the Word of the Lord", and "Thanks be to God", are endless and will increase in length as the service progresses. The final reader will probably end with a lengthy exegesis on what he thinks the passage means, correcting whatever you said in your sermon.

I once made the mistake of not telling all readers which Bible translation to use. One, an Old Testament expert, therefore decided to read in Hebrew. Not to be outdone, another read her Gospel passage in Greek – apologizing beforehand that it may not be a perfect rendering, as she was spontaneously translating it from the English. And some say Christians are not competitive.

You have two alternatives: either repeat last year's service without any alteration, saying that it could not be improved, or design your own – and then take Christmas off.

Your loving uncle,
Eustace
©The Revd Dr Gary Bowness



That's what I like to hear."
"Yes sir, I understand your concern and I'll try harder."
Seeming puzzled, the manager went on to comment, "It's odd though, you coming in late. I know you're retired from the Armed Forces. What did they say to you there if you showed up in the morning so late and so often?"
The old man looked down at the floor, chuckled quietly, then said with a grin, "They usually saluted and said, 'Good morning, Admiral, can I get your coffee now, sir?'"



Therapy

Ever since I was a child, I've always had a fear of someone under my bed at night. So I went to a shrink and told him: "I've got problems. Every time I go to bed I think there's somebody under it. I'm scared. I think I'm going crazy."

See over

“Just put yourself in my hands for one year,” said the shrink. “Come and talk to me three times a week and we should be able to get rid of those fears.”

“How much do you charge?”

“Eighty dollars a visit,” replied the doctor.

“I’ll sleep on it,” I said.

Six months later the doctor met me on the street. Why didn’t you come to see me about those fears you were having?” he asked.

“Well, eighty bucks a visit, three times a week for a year, is \$12,480. A bartender cured me for \$10. So I put the money saved towards a new pickup truck.”

“Is that so?” With a bit of an attitude, he said, “And how, may I ask, did a bartender cure you?”

“He told me to cut the legs off the bed. There’s nobody under there now.”

Good Advice?

(Spotted in newspaper column in South Carolina)

Dear John,
I hope you can help me. The other day I set off to work, leaving my husband in the house watching television. My car stalled and then broke down a mile down the road, so I had to walk back to get my husband’s help. When I got home I couldn’t believe my eyes: he was in the bedroom with our neighbour’s daughter. I am 32, my husband is 34 and the neighbour’s daughter is 19. When I confronted him he admitted that they had been having an affair for the past six months. He won’t go to counselling, and I’m afraid I’m a wreck and need advice urgently. Can you please help?



Sincerely Sheila

Dear Sheila,
A car stalling after being driven a short distance can be caused by a variety of faults in an engine. Start by checking that there is no debris in the fuel line. If it is clear, check the vacuum pipes and hoses on the intake manifold and also check all grounding wires. If none of these approaches solves the problem, it could be that the fuel pump itself is faulty, causing low delivery pressure to the injectors. I hope this helps.

John

More Valuable Advice

Remember:

Nothing is foolproof to a sufficiently talented fool.

The Story behind *Abide with Me*



One of the most famous hymns in the world came out of Brixham, near Torbay, Devon, in 1847. In those days it was a poor, obscure fishing village, and the vicar was the Revd Henry Francis Lyte. It was a discouraging place to be a pastor but Henry felt that God wanted him there. And so he stayed, though it was lonely work and he suffered constant ill health. By the time he was 54, Henry had contracted tuberculosis and asthma, and he and his family knew he was dying. It would have been so easy for him to look back on his life and feel a complete failure. What had he ever much accomplished? And yet – and yet – Henry knew that in life it is not worldly success that matters, but how much we respond to Jesus Christ, and how much we follow him.

In September of 1847 Henry was preparing to travel to the south of France, as was the custom for people with tuberculosis at that time. One day before he left, he read the story in the gospel of Luke about the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. They were met by Jesus on the day of his resurrection, and they invited him to stay with them because it was getting late. “Abide with us,” they said “for it is towards evening.” These words struck a chord with Henry, who knew that it was getting “towards evening” in his life. So he sat down and wrote this hymn as a prayer to God.

Shortly after Henry wrote this hymn, he preached his last sermon. He was so ill he practically crawled into the pulpit to do so. A few weeks later, in Nice, France, he died, and so of course he never knew that his hymn would go on to become world famous, and that nearly 100 years later it would be the last hymn played by the brave musicians on board the Titanic the night it went down.

Parish Pump, September 2014

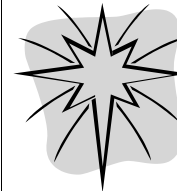
1st February	Celebrant & Preacher	Revd Alja Tollefsen
	Duty Warden	Joyce Wigboldus
	Intercessor	Pauline Talstra
	Chalice	Janice Collins
Presentation in the Temple	Maureen van der Heide	(1) Malachi 3: 1-5
	Fred Schonewille	(2) Hebrews 2: 14 to end
10:30 am Sung Eucharist	Gospel	Luke 2: 22-40



14th December	Celebrant & Preacher	Revd Alja Tollefsen
	Duty Warden	Everhard Ottens
Advent 3		
Sunday School: Jolanda Bestman	Readers to be arranged	
10:30 am Carol Service		

21st December	Celebrant & Preacher	Revd Alja Tollefsen
	Duty Warden	Joyce Wigboldus
Advent 4	Intercessor	Caroline Siertsema
	Chalice	Pauline Talstra Joyce Wigboldus
Sunday School: Erica Bonting Schotman	Jeanet Luiten	(1) 2 Samuel 7: 1-11, 16
	Hans Siertsema	(2) Romans 16: 25-27
10:30 am Sung Eucharist	Gospel	Luke 1: 26-38

24th December	Celebrant & Preacher	Revd Alja Tollefsen
	Duty Warden	Everhard Ottens
	Intercessor	Everhard Ottens
	Chalice	Caroline Siertsema Simone Yallop
Christmas Eve	Brenda Pyle	(1) Isaiah 9: 2-7
	Blair Charles	(2) Titus 2: 11-14
	22:30 hrs Sung Eucharist	Gospel



25th December

Christmas Day



Information to follow

28th December	Celebrant & Preacher	Revd Alja Tollefsen
	Duty Warden	Everhard Ottens
First Sunday of Christmas	Intercessor	Janice Collins
	Chalice	Everhard Ottens Count Alfred Solms
Sunday School: Patrick Saridjan	Carla Koomen	(1) Isaiah 61: 10 to 62: 3
	Linda ten Berge	(2) Galatians 4: 4-7
10:30 am Sung Eucharist	Gospel	Luke 2: 22-40

4th January	Celebrant & Preacher	Revd Alja Tollefsen
	Duty Warden	Everhard Ottens
	Intercessor	Janice Collins
	Chalice	Simone Yallop
Epiphany	John Bestman	(1) Isaiah 60: 1-6
	Brenda Pyle	(2) Ephesians 3: 1-12
10:30 am Sung Eucharist	Gospel	Matthew 2: 1-12

11th January	Celebrant & Preacher	Revd Alja Tollefsen
	Duty Warden	Joyce Wigboldus
Epiphany 1	Intercessor	Jeanet Luiten
	Chalice	Joyce Wigboldus
	Linda ten Berge	(1) Genesis 1: 1-5
	Fred Schonewille	(2) Acts 19: 1-17
10:30 am Sung Eucharist	Gospel	Mark 1: 4-11

18th January	Celebrant & Preacher	Revd Alja Tollefsen
	Duty Warden	Everhard Ottens
	Intercessor	Everhard Ottens
Epiphany 2	Chalice	Pauline Talstra
	Janice Collins	(1) 1 Samuel 3: 1-10
	Blair Charles	(2) Revelation 5: 1-10
10:30 am Sung Eucharist	Gospel	John 1: 43-51

25th January	Celebrant & Preacher	Revd Alja Tollefsen
	Duty Warden	Joyce Wigboldus
	Intercessor	Caroline Siertsema
Conversion of Paul	Chalice	Everhard Ottens
	Elizabeth van der Heide	(1) Jeremiah 1: 4-10
	Arjan Haffmans	(2) Acts 9: 1-22
10:30 am Sung Eucharist	Gospel	Mt: 19: 27 to end