

Bible Lands

Summer 2012

Magazine of the Jerusalem and the Middle East Church Association

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Jerusalem



Egypt & North Africa



Cyprus & the Gulf



Iran



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THE JERUSALEM AND THE MIDDLE EAST CHURCH ASSOCIATION

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‘Christians in the Middle East’

by the Archbishop of Canterbury

Following are edited extracts from the Archbishop’s address in the House of Lord’s debate.

“It is all too easy to go along with the assumption that Christianity is an import to the Middle East rather than an export from it. The truth is that for two millennia the Christian presence in the Middle East has been an integral part of successive civilisations – a dominant presence in the Byzantine era, a culturally very active partner in the early Muslim centuries, a patient and long-suffering element in the complex mosaic of ethnic jurisdictions within the Ottoman Empire. To be ignorant of this is to risk misunderstanding a whole world of political and religious interaction and interdependence and to yield to the damaging myth that on the far side of the Mediterranean or the Bosphorus, there is a homogeneous Arab and Muslim world, a parallel universe. The Middle East is not a homogeneous region, and the presence of Christians there is a deep-rooted reality. We are not talking about a foreign body, but about people who see their history and their destiny bound up with the countries where they live, and bound up with a dominant Muslim culture, which they are likely to see in terms very different from those that might be used by western observers.

Yet at the present moment, the position of Christians in the region is more vulnerable than it has been for centuries. The flow of Christian refugees from Iraq in the wake of constant threat and attack has left a dramatically depleted Christian population there. In Egypt, this involves a notably significant percentage of the population, with a deeply distinguished history, and it is not surprising if the current situation is causing apprehension, despite the many excellent examples of Christian-Muslim co-operation on the ground there. The Coptic community has seen levels of emigration rise to unprecedented heights, in a way that would have been unthinkable a very few years ago. Perhaps the most troubling example is the case of the Palestinians, one of the most sophisticated and professional Christian populations in the region, but now a fast-shrinking presence as a result of the tragic situation in the West Bank. Whether in Egypt, Israel and Palestine or Syria, what were once relatively secure communities are now increasingly vulnerable.

Christians in the Middle East are very sensitive to being described as “minorities”. For them, never mind the

statistics, this can imply that they are somehow alien or marginal, rather than being both indigenous to their countries and historically bound up in the fabric of their societies. One of their real grievances is the twofold undermining of their identity that comes from a new generation of Muslim enthusiasts treating them as pawns of the West and, on the other hand, from a western political rhetoric that either ignores them totally or thoughtlessly puts them at risk by casting military conflict in religious terms. Talk of crusading comes to mind. They are looking at the prospect of centuries of coexistence being jeopardised in a new, polarised global politics.

Many of the Christian communities face a painful dilemma. Under some of the discredited regimes of recent years, they have enjoyed a certain degree of freedom from aggression or discrimination. The first tremors of political change were felt by some Christians as a bit of a threat to this status quo. Yet many of them felt equally that the popular pressure for accountable government and clear principles of civil liberty for all was a welcome development—indeed, a development of exactly the kind that so many Arab Christian intellectuals of the early and mid-20th century had eloquently argued for.

At the moment, most of these communities urgently want to know whether the ‘Arab spring’ will be good or bad news for them, and for other non-Muslim or non-majority groups. The potential for a radical political renewal throughout the Middle East and North Africa is immense, as are the risks. My contention has been that the security and well-being of the historic Christian communities in the region are something of a litmus test in relation to these wider issues of the political health of the region.”

December 2011

See page 11 for an Arab response

Full text of the Archbishop’s address:

<http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/articles.php/2277/house-of-lords-debate-on-christians-in-the-middle-east>

Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf

Bishop Michael Lewis explains that the Diocese of Cyprus & the Gulf covers Oman, the Yemen, the seven United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Iraq and the whole of Cyprus. "In every part of the diocese, except in Cyprus and Iraq, the congregations are largely expatriate, made up of Christians from Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, the Philippines and the African continent. Many do not come from an Anglican background but find a welcome church home in our Anglican congregations. Through some intricate and special relationships, the Diocese is often responsible for churches and congregations which are not Anglican, some of which are still working out their relationships to the Bishop and Synod. Worship is largely in English but in some locations we have liturgy in Arabic, Syriac-Aramaic, Tamil and Urdu. Bishop Azad Marshall of Iran has a particular ministry to the Urdu-speaking congregations within our diocese."



The synod members

Diocesan Synod

Bishop Michael comments on the synod:

"It has become clear to me that at a time of comparatively rapid change and development, some form of notification of Synod decisions and some sense of directions adopted is desirable at the earliest stage". He has circulated some of the main decisions and proposals. They include the approval of the financial statements of the past year and the

budget for the present year. He drew attention to the inclusion in the budget of contributions from the Chaplaincies, not yet received. "The proposals are: that administration of the wedding ministry in Cyprus be centralized and that its 'profits' should form one of the income streams to a revitalized Bishop's Mission and Development Fund; that income from the JEMT (Cyprus) Trust should form a second income stream; that, assuming that chaplaincies set aside 10% of their income for charitable purposes, 30% of that money

(or 3% of income) form a third income stream for the Fund, and in addition, that every Chaplaincy should make an annual payment to the Diocese of 10% of its income, as previously agreed as an aspiration. This summary cannot do justice to a complicated issue. Much further work needs to be done, and is planned, on the issues, particularly, of how 'income' is to be assessed; and on the constitution of the Bishop's Fund and its method of working."

The Synod gave a lot of time to communications. The bishop said that a strategic plan for communication in the diocese was outlined and would be developed

during the year. The new website would be key and was almost ready to launch and would include news reports from chaplaincies and copies of all Synod papers, for more detailed reference.

Following the report on Retreats Ministry it was decided to set up a Diocesan Spirituality Team whose role would be, with the bishop, to oversee the development of spirituality ministries for the diocese. The financial implication was that the diocesan contribution to this work would be increased in order that the field workers become a diocesan resource.

Obituary

Mr Roger (Bob) Wilcox, 1934-2012

Bishop Clive Handford, formerly Bishop of Cyprus and the Gulf and Presiding Bishop of the Province remembers a devoted servant of the church:



All who knew him were shocked to learn of the death of Bob Wilcox on 18th April after a short illness. Bob was a Director of the Jerusalem and the East Mission Trust, a member of the JMECA Council and of the Committee of the Friends of the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf.

The first part of Bob's working life was in the Army which he joined as a boy entrant. Service in the Royal Army Medical Corps took him to such places as Singapore, Nepal, India, Cyprus and Germany. It was in Nepal that he met Emily who was an Army Nurse. They celebrated their Golden Wedding last December. Bob left the Army at the age of thirty nine in the rank of Major.

Moving to Abu Dhabi in 1976 as Administrator of the Corniche Hospital, Bob began a strong link with the Middle East which would last for the rest of his life. It was there that his faith was quickened and his involvement in the active life of the Church became clear. Among other skills, he was a most efficient Church Council secretary, helpful in all manner of ways, not least in local relations. Senior posts were to follow in Riyadh, Jeddah, Kenya and Germany.

Settling back into England at Nether Wallop, Bob was closely involved in the local Church as well as the Parish Council of which for a time he was chairman. Moving some four years ago to Downton, south of Salisbury, he and Emily soon became part of the community, especially that of St Laurence's Church where Bob was successively treasurer and churchwarden. His faith, which had deepened and strengthened over the years, was, with his family, the bedrock of his life.

Impeccably dressed, whatever the occasion, and always moving with a sense of purpose, the outward appearance mirrored the inner man. Bob loved life and was always interested in people. His efficiency had a human face. Whatever he undertook he gave himself unstintingly. He was ready to think hard, form a view and express it cogently and constructively, with a good deal of commonsense. He was no admirer of pretentiousness or waffle.

Bob will be greatly missed. As we thank God for his life, we express our deep sympathy to Emily, their sons Duncan and Alisdair and their families. May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

Church of the Epiphany Doha, Qatar

Following is an edited summary of a report to Synod presented by Ven Canon Bill Schwartz, OBE and Revd Jebaraj Devasagayam Chaplains, Church of the Epiphany.

Last year we stated that 2010 had been a pivotal year for the Anglican Church in Qatar. Little did we imagine how much more 2011 would be a year of change – with milestones for the future of the Christian Church in Qatar. At this time last year we were facing a number of beginnings. Father Jebaraj had arrived to join the ministry. Phase One of the building project had been completed but permission to use the building had not yet been given. The re-design of Phase Two was a matter of discussion, amidst continuing efforts to raise funds from sources local and far away. God continues to bless and strengthen us, 2011 was a good year!

The Anglican Centre

As mentioned above, at this time last year the first phase of our building project was completed but not licensed for use. That seems such a long time ago now, with the building now in full capacity all weekend and every evening. More than 40 congregations now minister at the Anglican Centre. Our staff work very hard to maintain the buildings, manage the scheduling of all of the regular services and of special events and days of worship for so many congregations. The income from the Centre is managed in a way that those congregations who meet at the Centre make a significant financial contribution toward the continuing cost of construction and eventual completion of the building project. Fr Bill, Fr Jebaraj, and the church secretary share space with the Centre staff and our project manager, who supervises the building project. It's a veritable hub of activity every day serving the administrative needs of church centre, construction project, relations with the government and the multiple congregations who worship there.

Our Building Project

Partly on the strength of the income from the Anglican Centre, and augmented wonderfully by the generous support and hard work on the part of our congregation in raising funds, the Building Project continues to move forward steadily. Contractors and consultants have been amazingly cooperative, helping us reduce expenditure in many ways while creatively solving day-to-day issues as they come up. A business plan was produced in the early part of 2011 resulting in a loan facility which will allow the project to be completed within the 2012 calendar year. We are excited, encouraged and thankful! Fund Raising efforts now concentrate on specific items. Soon, the newly re-designed Epiphany website will provide an opportunity

for friends of Epiphany to sponsor a pew, or the new altar, or the communion rail, or the baptismal font, or a stained glass window, or the reredos, etc. There is more work to do, but we have every reason to be confident based on the faithfulness of God over the past three years. It is truly encouraging to reflect that together, in God's grace and during that time, we have raised just under \$5,000,000 in various projects large and small.

Looking Ahead

As we look around during our worship services it is obvious that increasing numbers of people are committing themselves to participation rather than simply attendance. Our understanding of what it means to be a church is strengthened because more and more people are contributing as readers, ushers, bringing flowers or refreshments, teaching Friday School and otherwise giving of themselves for the benefit of the whole congregation. It is also worth noting that the 2011 budget called for QR 200,000 more income than in previous years, more than our history of giving would have indicated possible. Well, we closed 2011 with only a little more than QR1,000 deficit. Together, Epiphany has grown in so many ways over the past year. We look forward to meeting the (still unknown) challenges and opportunities of the coming year with creativity and enthusiasm.

Staff Personnel: Archdeacon John Holdsworth

"Archdeacon Holdsworth is territorial archdeacon of Cyprus and also executive archdeacon – a combination of something like vicar-general and diocesan secretary – as well as chaplain of Larnaca. His arrival has led to progress in several necessary areas not least the proper development of policies in such matters as the protection of children and vulnerable adults. He is also leading a review of the Retreats ministry and the much appreciated work of Maggie LeRoy and Judy Cannan, and he oversees the smooth operation of the Diocesan Office with its talented and experienced staff, Mrs Georgia Katsantonis, Mrs. Anetta Stylianou and Mr. Savvas Demetriou. John Holdsworth joins me, Archdeacon Bill Schartz and Mr John Banfield in having a particular concern for the regular strategic overview of the Diocese."

Aden

The following letter from Canon Peter and Nancy Crooks show the dangers and difficulties faced in Aden today.

Letter from Aden

The cat moved delicately around the edge of the bean bag before settling comfortably in the ray of spring sunshine in the front of our son's home in Reading. The cat, though far from obese, is fatter than any we ever saw in Yemen and, if a few weeks ago, or even 10 days ago we had been told that we would today be watching Holly on her bean bag, we would have been surprised. But, as a friend of ours once said, 'in the Middle East things can take a long time to happen, but when they do – they happen fast.'

Over the last few weeks there have been fire fights across Aden almost daily and often well into the night. There have also been occasional roadside bombs. Several days ago, Mansour, our administrator told Nancy and I that we should leave the office and go to our less exposed apartment for 'security reasons' for the rest of the day. The next day (18th March), Joel, an American language teacher was gunned down in Taiz, two hours drive away. A few days before, a Swiss woman was kidnapped in the Red Sea port of Hodeidah, where she too had been working as a language teacher. Both were known to be devout Christians. The group who took the one and murdered the other, is openly affiliated to Al Qaeada and singled Joel out for his Christian zeal. The organisation has promised to kidnap others. We thought it unnecessary to further test their resolve or to put ourselves and those we love and work with in Aden, at further risk by staying.

We flew out with Royal Jordanian via Amman and shortly afterwards the lovely Korean couple, Drs Jihong and Sunghye, who had come from Korea to join us for a few weeks, have reluctantly taken the same decision as ourselves and flown out.

It was hard to leave without saying good bye to the staff, which we thought it best not to do. Before dawn, Mansour drove us in a beat up, nondescript car by a circuitous route to the airport.

A few minutes before the clinics closed on our last morning, a tired young Somali lad called in wanting help. He was from Mogadishu and had arrived by boat ten days earlier. The crossing had taken 40 hours. There were 120 squeezed aboard. Each one had paid a million Somali shillings – equivalent to US\$50 for the trip. The only thing he brought with him other than his clothes was a plastic bottle of water. He is 17. He is just one of hundreds who make the perilous journey

every week. He left his family and a city in flames for a refugee camp and a country itself, teetering on the brink. We flew home, thankfully, yesterday – swiftly and in comfort to security, friends and our family. I think the young Somali's name was Omar.

Remember him in your prayers, Joel's family too, and Jihong and Sunghye as they ponder their next step, and all who continue to work so faithfully and well back at Christ Church. Thank you for your support and your prayers.

Holly the cat, has now moved into the window, in pursuit of the sun. With much love and our very best wishes in Christ

March 2012

Staff Personnel:

The Revd Catherine Dawkins and the Revd Nigel Dawkins

The Bishop in Cyprus and the Gulf, the Rt Revd Michael Lewis, has announced that the Revd Catherine Dawkins, formerly licensed non-stipendiary priest in the Chaplaincy of Dubai with Sharjah and the Northern Emirates, has resigned in order to move to the UK to become Clerk to Marshall's Charity, which makes grants for parsonages and churches in the Church of England and is also an educational foundation. Her husband, the Revd Nigel Dawkins, formerly Chaplain, Mission to Seafarers in Dubai, has also resigned to work in the UK on ideas in the field of web-based theological education. The Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf wishes them well in their future life and ministry.

The Revd Harrison Chinnakumar

The Bishop is also pleased to announce the appointment of Father Harrison as Anglican Chaplain of St Paul Kuwait. He was ordained in the Diocese of Nagpur in India and has extensive experience as missionary and pastoral parish priest. His present post is in the area of human rights as director of community relations with the International Justice Mission, Bangalore. His principal languages are Tamil, Hindi, and English. Harrison Chinnakumar is married to Selvarani, a teacher of mathematics and economics. Their children are Gracia, 13, and Ephraim, 10.

Diocese of Jerusalem

The Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem, a diocese of the worldwide Anglican Communion, extends over five countries, including Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Palestine and Israel, within the Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East. There are 27 parishes that minister to the needs of their communities, centered on the Cathedral Church of St. George the Martyr in Jerusalem. The church supports 33 institutions, which include hospitals, clinics, kindergartens and schools, vocational training programmes, as well as institutions for the deaf, the disabled and the elderly, reaching out to interfaith neighbours in mutual respect and cooperation.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, a Jerusalem pilgrim

The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Reverend Dr. Rowan Williams, ended his pilgrimage to the Land of the Holy One at St. George's Anglican Cathedral, singing Evensong with the congregation and visitors who welcomed him at a reception in the Guest House. The Archbishop had visited other Anglican centres on his journey and had stayed at the Guest House in Nazareth.

Following the reception Bishop Suheil hosted a private dinner at his residence. The dinner was attended by religious leaders, diplomats, and clergy from the cathedral and from Lambeth.

Discussions were held on the social and religious development in the region and especially the Christian presence in the Holy Lands and throughout the Middle East. Archbishop Rowan was impressed by the show of ecumenical solidarity among all those present.

His Beatitude Theophilos III, Patriarch of Greek Orthodox Church (front row, second from right); His Beatitude Msgr. Fuad Twal, Patriarch, Latin Church (centre); Archbishop Aris Shirvanian, Armenian Orthodox Church (third from left), representing His Beatitude

Archbishop Torkom II Manoogian, who was ill at this time. Bishop Suheil (second left) hosted the dinner. Also present were Sir Vincent Fean, British Consulate General; Mr. John Gatt-Rutter, EU Representative; The Revd. Canon Jonathan Goodall, Lambeth Palace; The Revd. Toby Howarth, Lambeth Palace; The Very Revd. Dr. Graham Smith, Dean of St. George's College, and The Revd. Canon Hosam Naoum, Canon of the Cathedral of St. George the Martyr. Apologies were received from Mr. Daniel Rubenstein, the American Consulate General.



Diocesan Institutions Grow

Support for the renewal and extension of the 33 Diocesan institutions continues to be a principal focus of Bishop Suheil's episcopate

In the Lebanon

All Saints Church, St. Luke's Centre Beirut and Andwig Inst. for the Deaf

The Evangelical Church representative in the Lebanese parliament, Mr. Bassem Shab, was among the guests when Bishop Suheil met with the church leaders and parish members of All Saints Beirut. At the reception the issues concerning the congregation were fully discussed.

The bishop and his wife went on to the diocesan institution, St. Luke's Centre for Mentally Disabled Children where they were briefed on the workshops that are held at the centre. They also visited the chicken farm, glass painting, and the chocolate factory that have been created to ensure the funding of some activities of the centre.

The bishop is consulting with the Lebanese church lawyer, Mr. Salah El-Dabagh, with the intention of retrieving the Andwig Institute for the Deaf and returning it to the Episcopal Church as it was from its origins.

In Jordan

Episcopal School Irbid and Bishop's School Husun

There is an increasing demand for education and the Episcopal schools are highly regarded and much sought. The Episcopal School at Irbid is being further extended and Bishop Suheil has blessed the newly constructed third floor of the Episcopal School in Irbid. Mrs. Haifa Najjar, Director-General of the Ahliyyah and Bishop's schools in Amman, was attending with the bishop who thanked all those who had worked on building the third floor and having it ready for students. Bishop Suheil and Mrs. Haifa donated the remaining amount needed to complete the computer laboratory.

The new Episcopal School in Husun is on schedule to open at the beginning of the next academic year. The bishop has visited the construction site. It is a huge encouragement to Christians in the region that the education provided by the Anglican Church is valued so highly by Moslem and Christian who work closely together.

In the West Bank

Episcopal Vocational Training Centre Ramallah

Bishop Suheil and the board members of the Episcopal Technological and Vocational Training Centre have opened the newly renovated training kitchen. The Hotel School effort is to help young people gain skills suited to the growing tourism and hospitality industry in Palestine. The new renovated facility will enable students to gain practical experience in cooking for and serving customers in conditions similar to those of a professional restaurant and catering facilities.

Palestine is faced with a shortage of skilled personnel in the hospitality sector, particularly of cooks and waiters. At the same time, unemployment, especially among young people is particularly high in the country. To address this situation, the Episcopal Vocational Training Centre, in cooperation with the Arab Evangelical School, founded the first Hotel School in the West Bank in 2008. The school offers a two years vocational program that gives the High School certificate, as well as short training courses in cooking, service, hospitality management and nutrition that are accredited from the Ministries of Education and Labour.

The ETVTC partners from Germany, the diocese office staff from Jerusalem and many other friends joined in an excellent dinner prepared by the Hotel School students and trainers. More than 220 students have been trained in different courses at the Vocational Training Centre.



Jerusalem: International and Ecumenical

Our bishop in Jerusalem is at the centre of the world's political and ecclesiastical affairs. There is no escape from the Holy City's complex history of conflict. He continues to fulfil his enthronement vow, made five years ago, to remember that it is the peacemakers who bring blessings and are blessed.

International

The bishop regularly hosts international visitors who come to Jerusalem from every part of the world. There is the regular round of pilgrims who receive excellent hospitality at the Guest House in the cathedral compound. There is also a steady flow of church leaders who bring greetings from other Anglican provinces. Among the more recent was a deputation from the Australian National Council of Churches. Nineteen members of the Council, including Roman Catholics, visited the cathedral and heard Bishop Suheil urge them to return home to advocate, to pray and to bring pilgrims to visit and to worship with the faithful of the land of the Holy One.

The bishop continues his own work of advocacy on his many journeys. One of the more recent was to the Diocese of Los Angeles where he and his wife were the guests of Bishop Jon Bruno. He attended the Middle East Peacemakers luncheon where he spoke about the realities of life in the land called holy. He also met with the Presiding Bishop, Katherine Jefferts-Schori, who pledged the continued support of the Episcopal Church of the United States. In New York they met with the *'Friends of the Diocese of Jerusalem'* at a fund raising dinner, where they renewed acquaintance with Jerusalem veterans, Canon John Peterson and Canon Bob Edmunds (pictured).

Ecumenical

There is an unhappy history of bitter conflict between the churches of Jerusalem, especially between the three Patriarchates: Greek, Armenian and Latin. This year Bishop Suheil was guest of all three during the Easter celebrations. The Eastern (Greek and Armenian) and Western (Latin) Easter were only a week apart and the bishop was able to celebrate the Western Easter at St George's Cathedral and then cross the river to Jordan where the church was observing the Eastern dates. On Good Friday Bishop Suheil joined with Lutherans and Presbyterians in the Via Dolorosa walk, bearing the cross (pictured) and praying at all the stations of the cross beginning at the Anglican cathedral and ending at the Lutheran cathedral. The bishop was also



received during Holy Week by the Greek Patriarch, His Beatitude Theophilus III (pictured below), when he exchanged greetings and shared refreshments in the Great Hall. The bishop was accompanied by Canon Hosam Nahoum the Canon Pastor of the cathedral and Revd Dr. Graham Smith, Dean of the College. The bishop was also welcomed, according to the Gregorian calendar, by the Latin Patriarch, His Beatitude Fuad Twal. Bishop Suheil was also invited by the Armenians to participate in the Maundy Thursday service, according to the Julian calendar, at St James' Cathedral. It was led by the Patriarchal Vicar, Nourhan Manoogian; Bishop Suheil read the Gospel which was held by two Armenian bishops (pictured above). Bishop Suheil, with the other heads of churches, processed through the Old City to visit the head of the Coptic Church, Archbishop Anba Abraham, where he shared concern for the Coptic community following the death of their Patriarch, Pope Shenouda.

It is an affirmation of Bishop Suheil's diligent and prayerful ecumenism that all the churches have joined in inviting Canon Hosam Nahoum, from the Anglican cathedral, to be the secretary to the Heads of Churches in Jerusalem.



What Future for Christians in the Middle East?

An Arab Conference calls for a Charter for the rights and protection of Christians based on democracy and religious freedom

The whole event was under the patronage of the Jordanian Royal Institute for Interfaith Studies (Riifs), in collaboration with the Syrian Orthodox Archdiocese of Aleppo and the Mennonite Central Committee. Christian and Muslim, bishops and scholars, discussed the situation of Christians in the Middle East, in light of the upheavals caused by the 'Arab Spring'. Starting from the question "Christianity in the East: where now?" the lay and religious from the area outlined points of common interest and divergence to safeguard the presence of the religious minority in the Arab Muslim-majority nations.

Professor Kamel Abu Jaber, Director of Riifs, emphasized the importance of the current context in the Middle East. Afterwards, His Eminence Mar Gregorios Yohanna Ibrahim, Metropolitan of Aleppo, on behalf of the Syrian-Orthodox Church, focused attention on the crucial problem which was the exodus of Christians from countries in the region for fear of conflict, violence and persecution. He also added that the religious minority are denied rights of citizenship and equality in some Arab nations.

The meeting was also addressed by Jordanian Prince Hassan bin Talal, who explained that "the Christians are in every respect Arabs, and are the pioneers of Arab thought and revival." He also added that "they are authentic and genuine citizens of their countries." He concluded that

cooperation between Christians and Muslims should be increased for the good of the Arab nations.

The conference urged greater collaboration between the Moslem and Christian communities, together with enhanced visibility in the media, in order to strengthen the awareness of the importance of the Christian presence in Arab societies. At the end of the meetings a final document of guidelines for future work was produced. Professor Kamel Abu Jaber of Jordan, the Syrian Metropolitan Mar Gregorios Yohanna Ibrahim, the Muslim scholar Ali Muhafza, Jordanian and Archbishop of Kirkuk, Louis Sako agreed to serve on a high-powered committee to further the objectives.

Finally, the Islamic-Christian leaders called for the effective implementation of the document, outlined by the Egyptian Al-Azhar University*, based on principles of freedom, respect for human rights, equality between citizens, without discrimination of race or creed. Desire was expressed for a meeting – under the leadership of Al-Azhar – designed to consolidate and strengthen cooperation in the future. Prince Ibn Talal of Jordan called for an *Arab Social Charter* regulating freedom and rights, by implementing the principles of social justice, human dignity and equality between citizens of one state.

** In defence of democracy and religious freedom*

On the other hand... Saudi Grand Mufti seeks to destroy churches

The following exchange shows the variety of conflicting views concerning the Christian presence, held within Islam.

A statement from the Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia sanctioning the abolition of all churches on the Arabian Peninsula has been met with incredulity, not only from Catholic and Orthodox bishops but also from within the Moslem community.

Sheik Abdul Aziz bin Abdullah, the highest Islamic authority in Saudi Arabia, has said it is "necessary to destroy all the churches of the region". The sheik was responding to a question by a delegation from Kuwait, which asked about a Kuwaiti parliamentarian's call for a ban on the construction of new churches. The MP, Osama al-Munawar, said he was planning to submit legislation that would remove all churches in his country. Later he said existing churches would remain, but the construction of new non-Islamic places of worship would be banned.

The Grand Mufti's response was based on a hadith in which

Muhammad declared: "There are not to be two religions in the Arabian Peninsula." The chairman of the RC German Bishops' Conference, Archbishop Robert Zollitsch, said that the Mufti "shows no respect for religious freedom". He said the Mufti's comments thwarted moves towards interfaith dialogue supported by the Saudi King Abdullah bin Abd al-Aziz. The council of bishops in Austria called for an "unambiguous affirmation of the right of churches and Christians to exist in this region".

Archbishop Mark of Yegoryevsk, the head of the Moscow Patriarchate Department for Foreign Establishments, described the statement as alarming. He said he hoped that the governments of the countries in the region would be surprised by the calls made by the sheikh, and would ignore them.

Iamaal Al-Shehab, Kuwait's Minister of Justice and Islamic Affairs, has said that the demolition of churches in Kuwait would be illegal, unconstitutional, and in violation of Islamic regulations.

The Baptism Site, Bethany Beyond Jordan

The King's Gift to the Anglican Communion



King Abdullah II has greatly favoured the Anglican Communion with the gift of land at the holy site of Our Lord's baptism which may truly be called the place where the faith began.

The Anglican / Episcopal Communion, with its 39 Church provinces, is spread around the globe. The figurehead, 'primus inter pares' and chosen leader of this community of believers and adherents is the Archbishop of Canterbury. The secular Head and Protector of the Faith in the United Kingdom is Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

The Prince of Wales and heir to the throne has already intimated that he would eventually want to be known as the 'Protector of Faith', including all peoples of faith.

The Anglican Communion is represented by the Diocesan Bishop in Jerusalem, Rt. Revd. Suheil Dawani of the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East, a small and unique Church that is characterized by its great many institutions of service, education and healing. The Anglican Church was proud to be invited to be among the custodians of the Baptism site when His Majesty King Abdullah II responded to the Archbishop of Canterbury and offered the Anglican Communion a plot of land to create a centre for pilgrims and visitors. His Royal Highness Prince Ghazi bin Mohammed, the King's representative and Head of the Baptism Site Commission that oversees its development and management, was present at the dedication of the land. To remain in style and create "a home away from home" for the world-wide Anglican Communion, he requested that a typically Anglican, British 'Gothic' Church be built.

Church of St. John the Baptist, Bethany Beyond Jordan

A new church will be built at the site of the baptism of Jesus. At the Majma (synod) of 2010 a unanimous decision was taken in support of the development of the Baptism site. This was the green light to go ahead with the building of the new Anglican/Episcopal church. It will be built on a piece of land given by His Majesty King Abdullah II of Jordan to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, and the Anglican Communion. Bishop Suheil accepted this generous gift on behalf of the Diocese of Jerusalem .

During a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 2010, Archbishop Rowan laid the cornerstone and dedicated the land as a



place of pilgrimage and worship. Bishop Suheil Dawani of the Diocese of Jerusalem said "We invite the worldwide church to participate in the development of this project. We would hope that all Anglicans joined by all Christians will consider it "their" church and "their" spiritual "home away from home". The design of the church will be in the Gothic style similar to many of the ancient Anglican/Episcopal churches. It will have a high altar facing Jerusalem and the main doors in the east.



It

will be built in the shape of the Jerusalem Cross and its very shape, form and interior should represent the various regions, traditions and cultures of the whole Anglican Communion.

The first Committee meeting chaired by Bishop Suheil Dawani, was held in Jordan in November 2011. The office is currently based in Salt.

As a pilgrims' church it is designed to meet the needs of the thousands of pilgrims who will visit the site. They may worship according to their own tradition, renew their baptism vows, or participate in baptisms on this ancient site of baptism.

A Management Committee has been formed under the leadership of Bishop Suheil Dawani and includes members



from the US, UK and other Dioceses of the Anglican Communion. The Patrons include a representative of the Jordanian Royal Family and HRH Prince Charles alongside the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The Baptism Site, Bethany Beyond Jordan

When we look at what happened at the Baptism site some 2000 years ago, we cannot escape the notion that this place is absolutely unique in the world. Yet it was a humble and simple spot at the crossroads of the world, north-south and east-west. Possibly it was a market place with stalls for food and drink and it is likely that there was an army camp nearby.

Having completed the trek from Jerusalem to Jericho and braved the river, travellers were happy to rest for a while. Others had come from Damascus or Rabbat Ammon (Amman) and beyond, on their way to Jerusalem via the village of Saltus (Salt). Perhaps some were working up courage for the trip up the mountains to Jerusalem, a 1000 meter climb, or for the reverse climb up the plateau of Moab and Ammon. There were always enough people for John the

Baptist to have an audience, although it was unmarked by large cities, ports or other features. The village of Bethany has yet to be discovered.

Yet nowhere but here is this very special place where John the Baptist, that unique and enigmatic figure in his camelhair robe and his diet of carob fruit locusts and honey, baptized his cousin Jesus, son of Miriam (as the Quran says). It seems likely that Jesus and John knew each other and one



could speculate that Miriam, Joseph and Jesus visited the house of their Uncle Zacharias, Aunt Elizabeth and cousin John in Ein Kerem, just south of Jerusalem. Did they share with each other what they thought of their respective, very special and rather spectacular missions? We only have their recorded words and John's feeble protest before the Baptism.

But then God Almighty took over... ***'and when Jesus the Messiah rose from the water the heavens opened to let the Holy Spirit of God through, to descend on Jesus in the form of a dove, and God himself spoke...'***

In fact this happened here three times:

- when Moses spoke with God face to face at their last discussion just before he died and was buried somewhere around Mount Nebo;
- when the prophet Elijah was taken up to heaven in a fiery chariot, rather forgetting to die properly first;
- and when the Holy Spirit of God descended in the form of a dove and God Almighty spoke of Jesus: ***"this is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased."***

Right here, by Mount Nebo, or the Moses-mountain as it is called in Arabic; by the place that tradition names the hill of Elijah; near the spring of St. John, just beyond the river Jordan; where Father, Son and Holy Spirit proclaimed the reign of God; here it is, in essence, that Christianity began.

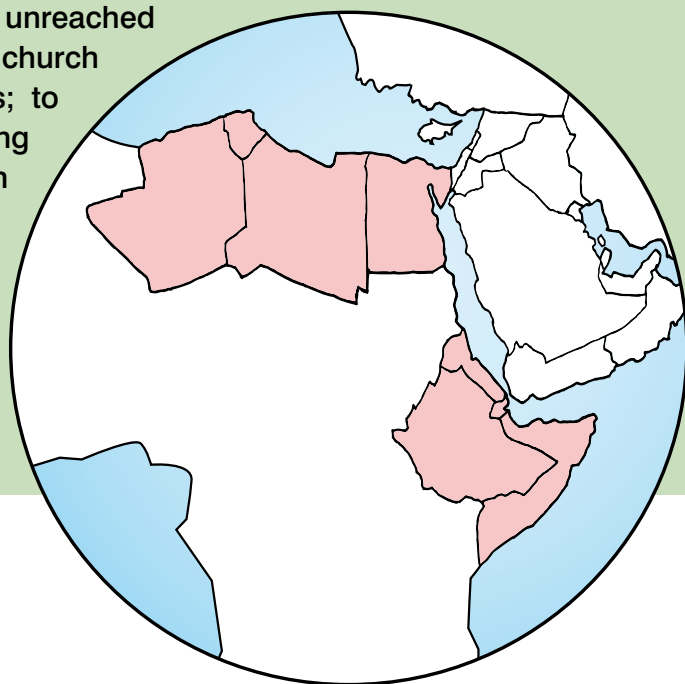


The Diocese of Egypt with North Africa and the Horn of Africa

Since its beginning in 1839, the Diocese has been committed to serve others as Jesus did. We are committed to serving all people holistically, regardless of their religion or social status. Numerically we are small, but in this strategic part of the world, we have a great opportunity and responsibility to be ambassadors of our Lord Jesus, demonstrating in 'Word and Deed' what our faith means to us. The Diocese supports over 30 institutions which include hospitals, clinics, nurseries, schools, a theological seminary, micro-enterprise ventures, vocational training programs, as well as institutions for the deaf and the disabled.

The five goals of the Diocese are: to reach the unreached with the Gospel of Christ; to grow Christ's church by making disciples and equipping leaders; to serve our neighbours; to work for unity among all Christians; to dialogue with other faith communities.

Support from The Jerusalem and Middle East Church Association (JMECA) to the Diocese in recent years has been directed to helping with mission work, ordination training for Egyptian candidates and medical outreach.



New Bishop for Horn of Africa

The Rev. Dr. Grant LeMarquand consecrated

The Rev. Dr. Grant LeMarquand, long-serving Professor of Biblical Studies and Mission at Trinity School for Ministry, is the new Assistant Bishop in the Diocese with special responsibility as Area Bishop for the Horn of Africa. He was consecrated on St. Mark's Day, April 25th, at the cathedral in Cairo. He will be installed on October 27th in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. "Grant is a great choice for this appointment. He and his wife Wendy have extensive experience as missionaries which should prepare them well for this new calling," remarked the Very Rev. Dr. Justyn Terry,

Trinity's Dean and President. "We will certainly miss his presence on the Trinity Faculty, but we wish him every blessing as he embarks on this new phase of ministry." The new bishop will continue teaching at Trinity until June. He and his wife Wendy plan to move to Gambella, Ethiopia in July or August.

Trinity School for Ministry is an evangelical seminary in the Anglican tradition. Begun in 1976, the seminary has trained more than 1,000 students from all over the worldwide Anglican Communion. As a global center for Christian formation, Trinity continues to produce outstanding leaders who can plant, renew, and grow churches that make disciples of Jesus Christ.



Cover picture:

The Bishop of Egypt ordains the new bishop assisted by the Bishop of N. Africa (first left), the Bishop of Cyprus and the Gulf (third from right) and visiting bishops.

Horn of Africa

THE GAMBELLA STORY

Gambella is a region in the west of Ethiopia which borders with Sudan. Gambella is geographically and culturally very different to the Ethiopian highlands. Malaria, tuberculosis, water-borne diseases, tribal conflict and flooding are regular features of life.

The work of the Anglican Church here began in 1996 in refugee camps in the region. Since then, through building relationships with indigenous peoples, churches have been established amongst the three major tribes, the Nuer, the Annuak and the Opuuo.

The Anglican churches have grown in an amazing way over the past few years in Gambella. Thousands of people have become believers in Jesus Christ and joined the church, which is also very active in meeting the needs of the people through education, community development, and health programmes.

There are now 53 churches in the Gambella Regional State, largely following the Baro River (a tributary of the White Nile) and clustered in Mission Centres. Each Mission Centre is served by a paid, ordained leader and a theology tutor, who visit the outlying village churches under their care and gather the people together regularly for meetings and prayer.

The Gambella Development

Literacy Classes

Many women in Gambella are not able to read and write. Through literacy classes run in thirty villages, hundreds of women have gained basic literacy skills in their mother tongue.

Health and Hygiene Community Project

Many of the health problems of people living in Gambella are a result of a lack of basic knowledge about hygiene and a lack of latrines. In 2011, 7200 households have received education on health and hygiene.

Agricultural Training

Agricultural land in Gambella is often used inefficiently as there is little crop rotation, a limited range of crops and no use of compost or manure. Training in efficient use of land is provided in order to promote effective agricultural methods to local farmers.

Library Facilities

For many students it is difficult to get access to the needed text books and to have a place keep up with their studies uninterrupted by the demands of household chores. The library at the Gambella Anglican Centre provides over 2000 students with access to the needed textbooks, computer access, and a quiet clean space to study.

Rev. Colin and Julia Hodgetts

Since the departure of Bishop Andrew & Janice Proud, Bishop Mouneer invited the Rev. Colin and Julia Hodgetts to serve at the Gambella Anglican Centre in Ethiopia. They supported the Anglican churches there by providing theological education and pastoral care to the many clergy and mission centres in the region. They were supported by CMS and have now returned to the UK where Rev. Colin has been commissioned to compose music. Bishop Mouneer says 'They have faithfully served the Diocese of Egypt with North Africa and the Horn of Africa, and have been constant in prayer, conflict resolution, and in seeking partnerships and funding to continue the ministries in Gambella. Thank you!'

Rev. Iri and Kate Mato

For the immediate future Rev. Iri and Kate Mato will be serving in Gambella. They will be supporting the Anglican churches in Gambella through theological education, filling in after the departure of Rev. Colin and Julia Hodgetts. Rev. Iri and Kate are supported by CMS New Zealand and for the past six years, they have been serving in Dodmoa, Tanzania at Msalato Theological College.

There are many needs and many possibilities for new projects in Gambella, including the school for the Opuuo people.

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Partnership Office

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The Way of Life Anti-Drug Programme

The Way of Life is a ministry based in Alexandria. It is run by Rev. Dr. Emil Zaky, and it seeks to raise awareness about drug addiction, and to provide counselling. The approach used is based on cognitive therapy and behaviour therapy methods. It is based on Christian principles, and aims to convert addicts from drug addiction to be Christ dependent.

Over the past two years, the Way of Life has run the following activities:

- **Prevention and raising awareness.**
36 awareness sessions have been held in different churches and community centres around Egypt. The Way of Life has published four booklets about drug addiction.
- **Training leaders.**
250 church leaders and community leaders have been trained so that they have the skills to deal with addiction problems in their community.

- **Counselling and treatment of addicts.**

Around 240 counselling sessions were held for addicts and their families. The Way of Life programme assisted 60 people to go to rehabilitation centres.

A testimony from a restored patient:

"Feelings of despair made me turn to drugs, taking them and selling them. Although I knew it was a bad road, it seemed like the only way to bring happiness.

"After some time, I was jailed for 100 days. I spent every penny I had collected and I even had to sell all the furniture in the house. I was so sad for my children who had to go through this and this hurt me a lot. After I was released I didn't know what to do, so I went back to selling drugs.

"But God didn't leave me. He sent a pastor to help me out. He taught me what it means to lean on God and to run to Jesus in times of trouble. This pastor then introduced me to Dr. Emil, and that's when I started a new chapter of my life. Through his love and care I managed to know the right way, to meet people who truly know God and live a reputable life. I'm thankful to everyone who has helped me deal with my problems."

Obituary

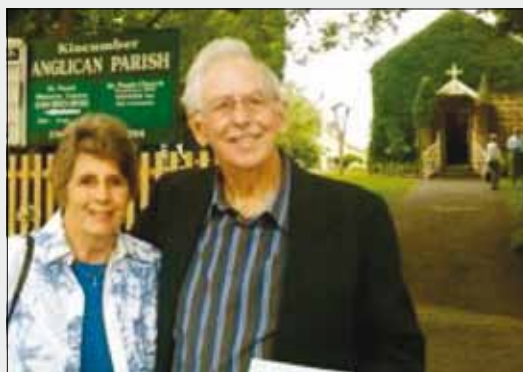
The Very Rev. Canon Jim Doust

Bishop Mouneer Anis writes:

It was with great sadness, and yet with a thankful heart, that we received the news of Jim's departure to his heavenly home. All of us here in the Diocese are going to miss him very much. We thank God for his life and great witness to God's love.

Jim was a great encouragement to me personally. He was the first to encourage me, when I was a practicing medical doctor, to offer myself to ordained ministry. After I became a bishop, he was also a great mentor and support to me, my wife and my sons. Jim was a real warrior for the Lord who would not waste a day without witnessing for Him. He was a man of prayer who was ready to pray with people at any time and at any place. He very much reminded me of Caleb who, in spite of his age, wanted to continue to serve and win the most difficult lands for the Lord. He continuously made himself available to serve in the most difficult and demanding places. In all this, Elaine was a faithful partner and co-worker with Jim for the Kingdom of God. Since 1993, they served in various places within the Diocese of Egypt and the Province. This included his ministry as the Dean of All Saints Cathedral Cairo. He also served in Algiers, Addis Ababa, Jordan, Sudan, and Syria.

It is our prayer that the Lord would fill the hearts of Elaine, all the family and friends with peace.



Egypt Special Appeal

The Special Appeal

In the wake of the Revolution in Egypt, many people suddenly lost their jobs, and had no income to support their family. Many people came to our Community Development Centres, churches, and ministries around Egypt, seeking assistance.

In February 2011, the Diocese made a Special Appeal so that we could help people in desperate circumstances. We were so blessed by the support of our partners, and through their generosity we were able to help many people in this difficult time.

In total, the Diocese received **594,188.75 LE** (\$98,400 USD) which was used to meet needs as follows:

- **9,617 emergency food packages** were given to very poor families.
- **4,610 people** were supported with medical care at Harpur Hospitals in Menouf and Sadat City.
- **166 micro-enterprise loans** were given so families could support themselves.
- **35 families** were assisted with rent and utility bills.
- **3,000 LE** was used to support families rebuilding their homes after flood damage.
- **40 children** were provided with new clothing.
- **500 students** had school fees paid.
- **10,000 LE** was given to renovate a Local Community Development Centre in a poor area of Suez.
- **8,000 LE** was given to renovate the Ezbet el Nakhl Local Community Development Centre.

Staff Changes

The Diocese Welcomes...

Mr. David Ghan will be living and working in Menouf for the next three years. David has been sent by the Mennonite Central Committee and he will be teaching English.

Mr. Peter and Mrs. Jane Nott are from CMS-UK. They will be in Cairo teaching English at the Episcopal Training Centre (ETC). They are encouraged by the many outward looking projects the Diocese has initiated.

The Diocese Says Farewell...

Mr. Jonathan and Mrs. Helen Lee

Jonathan and Helen served at Refuge Egypt over the past three years. Jonathan was the director of Refuge Egypt, and Helen served in many different aspects of

the ministry. Under Jonathan's leadership, the ministry grew and developed.

Mrs Amira Makram, Deputy Director Refuge Egypt, adds: *"Jonathan and Helen were Godly people who were very committed to their work. They meant a lot to us, both as leaders and as friends, and we miss them. Thank you for everything that you did for Refuge Egypt, for the staff, and for refugees."*

A Final Word from the Bishop

Bishop Mouneer writes of a visit to the Harpur Memorial Hospital:

One of the very encouraging stories I heard this month is from Harpur Memorial Hospital in Sadat City. This story was told to me by Thanaa, a receptionist at the hospital.

"Why are you always happy and smiling?" a Salafi Muslim patient asked Thanaa. *"I am happy to see you here. God has poured His love in our hearts towards you."* Thanaa answered. *"Because of your smiling welcome, we feel very comfortable here. Half of our illness disappears when we step inside this place"* These comments were not made by one patient only, but by many, especially by Salafi Muslims. Another Salafi Muslim donated 1000 Egyptian pounds, and lots of stationery from his bookshop to the hospital in recognition of the good services the hospital provided to his family. Another one said *"you are a light in this city."* As you know, Salafi Muslims are a very strong Muslim group who follow the literal teaching of the Quran and of the early Muslim ancestors. They aim to purge Islamic traditions and faith from impurities of the modern age. They usually look down on others. However, on my last visit to the hospital in Sadat City, I was surprised to see a large number of Salafis coming to be treated at the hospital, which is well known to be a hospital that belongs to a church. It was a real joy for me to hear Thanaa telling me all these stories. It made me convinced that the way ahead is to live with and serve our Muslim friends. Jesus was a great example to us as he went around doing good to all people, whether Gentile or Jew. This is the way we can share God's love with our neighbours. It is these stories that encourage us, and assure us that we are on the right track. Thanaa said that *"it is a great joy to serve our Muslim neighbours at the hospital."* It is indeed this joy that is our strength. May the Lord bless you!

St. George's College, Jerusalem sgcjerusalem.com

Jerusalem Bishop Suheil Dawani

St. George's College Jerusalem, an Anglican and ecumenical institution of adult education, in the Diocese of Jerusalem, enables its course participants to explore the world of the Bible and to engage with pilgrimage and archaeological sites in the context of an encounter with the various peoples of the Holy Land. It enables participants to encounter the three monotheistic faiths of Judaism, Christianity and Islam and encourages inter faith dialogue. It focuses on reconciliation, justice and peace issues in its immediate environment. It unites academic study, spirituality and travel in a dynamic process of holistic learning, equipping participants for mission and ministry in their own contexts.

See also new website: stgeorgescollegejerusalemtrust.org.uk



The Very Reverend Graham Smith, Dean of the College, writes:

If you are planning to visit the Holy Land, St. George's College Jerusalem is for you! The College is situated only a few minutes from the Old City of Jerusalem and provides year round courses that combine academic study, spirituality and travel.



Faith is transformed as you encounter the land and reflect with other course participants on the meaning of Christian discipleship. Understanding is enhanced as you listen to trained guides and academics. Regular worship and discussion sessions help you to meditate on the experience.

With St George's all your needs will be taken care of as you visit the holy places, meet the people of the land and study the Bible in a new context. Situated in the grounds of the Anglican Episcopal Cathedral, St. George's College is one of the institutions of the Diocese of Jerusalem. Ecumenical and interfaith, the College is open to people of all traditions. Courses are taught in English and are open to everyone, clerical and lay.

Your time at the College will introduce you to archaeological sites and holy places, churches, mosques and synagogues, immersing you in the various exotic cultures of the Middle East. There is no substitute for a St. George's course. In Jerusalem you will visit the different quarters of the Old City including the Church of the Resurrection, the Dome of the Rock and the Temple Mount.

In Bethlehem you will visit the Church of the Nativity and the Shepherd's Fields. In Galilee you will focus on the ministry of Jesus in Nazareth and around the Sea

of Galilee. Come with us to Turkey in the footsteps of St. Paul or to Egypt in the steps of the mothers and fathers of the desert. You will not be disappointed as you encounter stunning scenery, stimulating people and new ideas.

After your St. George's course you will read the Bible with new eyes, see Christian faith in the light of history, and appreciate the complexity of a multi-faith society.

Explore our website sgcjerusalem.com and sign up now for the trip of a lifetime. Let this year be your year for the Holy Land.

We look forward to welcoming you in Jerusalem.

The Rev. Dr. Kamal Farah, the Course Director

Fr Kamal Farah, Course Director, was born in the village of Kefar Bar'am in upper Galilee. He received his PhD in Advanced Linguistics from the Catholic University at the Sorbonne-Paris. Ordained to the Priesthood in 1967, he served as rector of churches



in North Galilee and Nazareth. He then returned to academia to pursue a second PhD at the Sorbonne in State-Church Laws. These studies prepared him to serve as President of the Church Court in both Galilee and Jerusalem and later as Director of the Episcopal Diocesan Church Office in Jerusalem. Moving to Amman, he directed the "Schneller Vocational School" and the Bishop's Episcopal School.

From 2000 through 2003 he was Course Director at St. George's College and then continued as Academic Dean and Senior Lecturer at St. George's.

His academic specialties include teaching on the New Testament, the historical and theological Jesus Christ and Human Rights Advocacy. He is fluent in Aramaic, Syrian, Arabic and Hebrew with a particular love for the Eastern Churches.

We are thrilled to have Fr. Kamal back at St. George's as Course Director. He has led numerous courses as a scholar and a pastor. His understanding of the Holy Land and his extraordinary teaching gifts, make him an ideal person to oversee the courses. Participants will have a profound experience learning under him and deepening their faith.

A College Course: Palestine of Jesus

A review by Nicholas and Wendy Plant of Leeds, edited from 'St George's Update' the Friends of the College magazine.

The College is close to the Old City (Damascus Gate) which was ideal as we could easily grab the opportunity to explore independently. Thus we were able to return to Holy Sepulchre by ourselves and to take part in worship with another group of pilgrims, to visit the Armenian Cathedral and to experience Vespers and on numerous occasions sit drinking coffee and watching the world go by (and receiving a blessing from the Muslim owner of the coffee shop!). We also walked the city walls.

But what of the course?

During our 2 weeks we saw many other tours seeing as much of Jerusalem as they could in a day. This made us so glad that the course had such an emphasis on spirituality and time for reflection. This meant that one did not just visit a place, but there was also time to absorb it. The Bible readings in the place where they probably happened were so powerful, especially on the Mount of Olives and beside the Sea of Galilee that their memory will always be with us, especially when we hear them read again. Our sermons have been full of these moments and hopefully they have not been boring holiday reminiscences, but have, as intended, allowed the events to come alive for our congregations as well. Visits to Qumran and Masada also made a tremendous impact on us.

Meeting and talking to Israelis and Palestinians was important for us. The visit to Nablus and hearing how

priests and imams work closely together was amazing and seeing the huge refugee camp opposite Bethel made one so grateful for all that we have and often take for granted. Our guide encouraged us towards shops run and supplied by Palestinians, so we felt that possibly we were doing just a little to help their economy. However, it was the visit to Bethlehem that horrified us the most. Simply going through the security wall was shocking and however much one reads about it, this does little to dampen the shock of actually experiencing it oneself. We found seeing teenage soldiers carrying high powered guns in Jerusalem disturbing; having them march through ones coach on the border holding guns was far worse.

So why would we encourage people to think about following one of St George's courses?

- *If you want to have a real spiritual insight into the Holy Land, the structure of the course enables this.*
- *The leaders are there to provoke and support. It is academically challenging but not too high powered.*
- *Worship at the cathedral allows you to join the local community.*
- *The college is close to the Damascus Gate so it is easy to visit the Old City independently.*



For us it was a wonderful experience about which we talk a lot. Last Easter back home had a new dimension as we could 'follow' Jesus in Holy Week and at Eastertide, remembering places we had seen and readings that we had heard. When we renewed our Baptismal vows in our home parish, our thoughts went back to renewing them on the shores of the Sea of Galilee at St Peter Primacy. This Christmas we will look at our crib figures with our grandsons and point out the carved donkey specially bought from one of the

woodcarvers of Bethlehem. Some talk about the commercialism of the Holy Land. Perhaps they should remember that even in Jesus' time the traders were there and it is up to you how much one allows the crowds to intrude on ones personal pilgrimage. We will never forget the crescent moon that was shining brightly as we made our way down to the Via Dolorosa at 6am to start our solemn Way of the Cross before the crowds were about. Thank you St George's for making all this possible and one day we hope we will be back to experience even more in the Palestine of Jesus.

Diocese of Iran

Iran Bishop Azad Marshall

Friends of the Diocese of Iran

John Clark, chairman of the Friends writes:

This is a time of great stress in Iran. The effects of the international sanctions on finance and trade imposed by the United Nations and the European Union are proving severe - and a number of sanctions have yet to come into force. There are reports of increase in food, heating and other costs so that life is becoming more difficult for ordinary people.

The threat of military attack by Israel possibly with the support of the USA and other western nations because of Iran's development of its nuclear capacity is causing restrictions in many areas of civic life. The detention of Christians of different backgrounds including some members of the Episcopal Church, as well as people from other minority communities has recently increased. It is not possible to go into detail in this issue about the situation although there will be updates at our Conference.

What is important is that we continue in concern and prayer for our sisters and brothers in the congregations in Tehran, Isfahan and Shiraz, as well as all others who name the name of Jesus Christ. Remember in particular Bishop Azad who visited before Christmas, in February and in Holy Week - and the leaders of the congregations the Revd Christopher Edgar, Canon Sharifian and Mr Ashrafi But let us also pray for all the people of Iran at this difficult time and particularly for the leaders of Iran and other nations as the talk of attacks and war increases.

Friends of the Diocese of Iran
invite you to their

Overnight Residential Conference A FUTURE AND A HOPE



**September 8-9th 2012
at London School of Theology
Northwood, Middlesex**

The Conference will provide opportunities for:

- Hearing at first hand of the situation in Iran
 - International Ministries
- Renewing fellowship with friends
 - Persian Supper
 - Worship and Prayer

Participants and Guests:

Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali, Bishop Iraj and Minoo
Dr. Mehrdad Fatehi, Rev Bassi Mirzania
Sara Afshari, Tat Stewart

*All Conference enquiries to:
Mrs. Christine Goldsmid,
1 Berkeley Court,
Gordon Rd., Ealing W5 2AE
Tel 020 8998 4748
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Obituary

Mrs. Iris Sayyah 1926-2012

Iris died peacefully in February. She was noted for her nursing service in Iran from 1955 until the revolution of 1979. She was born in Lincolnshire, into a family of limited means. Her fragmented education was never completed but from earliest age she had set her mind on a nursing career and on missionary service. She achieved both and while serving in Iran fell in love with and married an Iranian Anglican pastor, Arastoo, with whom she had three children, the first of whom died when a few days old. She provided generous hospitality in the Persian tradition and their clergy home was a centre of care and counselling. In the 1979 revolution Arastoo was murdered and

Iris returned to Lincolnshire with her two sons, Komron and Kiumars. It was then her purpose to see them through college and university, which she achieved. Her memorial service was held on the 33rd anniversary of Arastoo's burial in Shiraz.

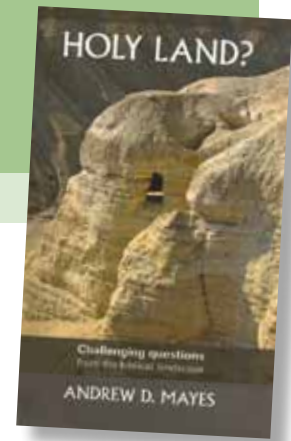
Margaret Dehqani-Tafti adds: 'Iris arrived in Iran to be part of a medical team in the diocese and was soon known to be a valued addition. This was noticed by one of our priests, Arastoo, who won her as his bride. She was a great asset to the clergy wives gatherings and her wisdom was always appreciated. She was a very down to earth person with her practical gifts and the love patience gentleness and loyalty which was particularly obvious in the darkest days when Arastoo was murdered.'

HOLY LAND?

Challenging questions from the biblical landscape

Andrew D. Mayes

SPCK £9.99 (978-0-281-06466-3)



For anyone contemplating a visit to the Holy Land today, this is an indispensable work of orientation and explanation of what the visitor will encounter. In particular, it describes the problems faced daily by Palestinians and by non-Palestinian Christians as they try to cope with the political realities of the area, although it also includes space for Jewish voices and opinions.

For those who have arrived in the Holy Land, this is not a guide to the history and topography of biblical sites. Of course, it mentions the most obvious ones: Bethlehem, sacred sites in Jerusalem, Mount Tabor (traditionally and probably wrongly identified as the site of the transfiguration), Emmaus (wherever that was), the Jordan valley, the Mediterranean, the desert, and so on. Its emphasis is on spirituality, however, not history or geography, and it relates the sites and landscapes to aspects of the Christian life. In a land where there are so many bitter memories of suffering, on both sides, the question of forgiveness and of overcoming the past looms large.

Each chapter ends with questions for meditation and discussion, and suggested further reading. The use of the Bible is distinctly non-critical, and there are occasional errors

of detail. The most serious is the claim that the name "Palestine" was first used by Hadrian in the second century AD, and that it was not used officially until the establishment of the British Mandate after the First World War.

In fact, a Semitic form of the name was used in Assyrian records from 800 BC, the Greek form was first used by Herodotus in the fifth century BC, and the name is well attested from the fourth century AD. In the 19th century, it was regularly used by writers who visited the area, such as in A. P. Stanley's classic *Sinai and Palestine* (1856).

The exact boundaries of Palestine have been, and remain, a contentious issue. This apart, if I were taking a party of students to the Holy Land today, I would certainly put this book on their preparatory reading list.

The author is a former Director of Studies at St. George's College Jerusalem.

The reviewer is Canon John Rogerson, Emeritus Professor of Biblical Studies at Sheffield University.

FAITH UNDER OCCUPATION

The Plight of Indigenous Christians in the Holy Land

Sasan Tavassoli

Published by EAPPI/JIC/WCC, Jerusalem, 2012 www.eappi.org/index.php



In the West, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is viewed as only a Muslim-Jewish one. Totally forgotten are the Christians in Palestine who constitute the cradle of Christianity.

This report not only aims to expose the grim realities of life under Israeli military occupation, and the impacts that it has on the Palestinian people in general, but also to shed some light on the fact that Palestinian Christians are indigenous to the Holy Land.

The report also disapproves of the unfounded Israeli and Christian Zionist propaganda that Palestinian Christians are depopulating due to Muslim fundamentalism in Palestinian society. Even more compelling is the way the report shows how Christian Zionist support for Israel's brutal military occupation of Palestine is threatening the existence of Palestinian Christians.

Since the establishment of the State of Israel, the Christian population of Palestine has greatly diminished. Their proportion in the population decreased from more than 18 per cent in 1948 to 2 per cent today. Christians in Bethlehem once comprised 90 per cent of the population, today Christians make up only 15 per cent in the city. The report's main focus is built around case studies of the impact of Israel's military occupation of Palestine and how Christians are affected.

Detailed cases involve cities and villages of Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Beit Sahour (a small village adjacent to Bethlehem, which has a long history of popular non-violent resistance), Beit Jalla, Nahhalin, Azzun (in which only two Christians are left), and Zababdeh. Further Christian communities are considered including St. George's Greek Orthodox Church in Burqin, just west of the northern West Bank city of Jenin, or the 700 Christians in Nablus and the communities in Ramallah and its environs.

The study concludes that Palestinian Christians are disproportionately affected by the occupation. A further Christian emigration not only from Palestine but also from other Middle Eastern countries could transform a political conflict into a religious one between Islam and Judaism. The West bears heavy responsibility for the exodus of the Palestinian and Arab Christians because its one-sided alignment with Israel's occupation and its attacks on Iraq has led to a mass flight of Christians.

The conclusion is that the root of Palestinian sufferings is in Israeli military occupation of their homeland.

Extracts from a review by Dr. Ludwig Watzal, journalist and broadcaster based in Bonn.

Obituary

Pope Shenouda III

Patriarch of the Coptic Orthodox Church

Pope Shenouda III, the 117th Patriarch of Alexandria, died on March 17th at the age of 88. He had been suffering from prostate cancer. He had been the spiritual leader of the Copts, the largest Christian community in the Middle East, for four decades and was revered by approximately 15 million followers in Egypt and worldwide.

His long tenure of office was fraught with controversy. In 1981 he was summarily dismissed by President Sadat, dethroned and sent to a desert monastery. He had demanded stronger Presidential protection for the Coptic community and action against their persecutors. Sadat's successor, Hosni Mubarak, restored him to his throne and his office and attempted to ban the Moslem Brotherhood. Pope Shenouda responded by giving his constant support to Mubarak, even endorsing his candidacy for re-election in 2005. In recent years this support distressed many of his own people who in the uprising risked their lives to bring Mubarak's regime to an end.



Pope Shenouda was a monk who had been content to live the hidden life of a hermit cave dweller in the Western desert until he was called to be secretary to Pope Kyrillos VI and in 1971 to succeed him. He was also a considerable scholar, the author of more than a hundred publications, noted for clarity of doctrine. The Coptic church grew in his time, the number of bishops increased from 20 to 83, including four in UK serving 30,000 Copts and the number of churches outside Egypt grew from seven at the beginning of his reign to 150 at the end. He did all within his power to improve relations with the Moslem majority. His Ramadan breakfasts with neighbours, his intellectual debates with Islamic academics and his constant teaching that 'Christians and Moslems are two organs in one body which is Egypt' healed many rifts. He will be remembered as a holy man who taught that 'Love generates love and separation generates separation'.

The Coptic community is now thrown into further confusion as they face uncertainty about their security under a new government without the leader they have revered for forty years.

Bishop Mouneer adds: "Our relationship to the Coptic Orthodox Church is the strongest among the different denominations in Egypt. Several times Pope Shenouda mentioned to me how much he appreciated the fact that he started his career as a teacher of English in our Anglican School in Cairo. He was a constant encouragement to me personally and to our church. He always sent representatives to our events and celebrations."

ELECTION OF SUCCESSOR

The new Patriarch will be named around the time this magazine is circulated. The appointment comes at a crucial time for church and nation as a new Constitution is being drawn up for the nation and the church will seek from it both participation and protection. Tradition requires the Patriarch to come from a monastic order. The Holy Synod will place three names in a sealed box which will be placed on the altar at a Sunday Eucharist. At the conclusion of the service and prayers for the right choice, a young boy, blindfolded, will be led to open the box and take one of the three papers. The name revealed will be declared Patriarch and the enthronement will follow within the month.

Editor

THE LAST WORD

John Clark, the JMET chairman, reflects...



October 19, 2012 marks the bicentenary of the death of Henry Martyn at the age of 31 in Tokat, Eastern Turkey. He was travelling back to his home city of Truro from Shiraz in Persia. In 1805 he had gone to India as a chaplain to the East India Company, but his main calling had been to supervise the translation of

the New Testament into Hindustani (Urdu) and Persian. He had travelled to Persia in 1811 for the sake of his health (the consumption that killed him was well advanced), to check the quality of the Persian translation and in the hope of going to Arabia to undertake an Arabic translation. As the sole foreigner in Shiraz he had, with Persian help, undertaken a complete revision of his translation and entered into extended debate orally and in writing with Muslim scholars, before leaving for north Persia to present his translation to the Shah.

His Persian New Testament became the bench mark for future translations and according to Iranian scholars had a significant effect on the development of modern literary Persian. His Muslim-Christian debates, although employing traditional mediaeval arguments, opened the way for a more eirenic engagement with Islam – a path that scholars like Canon Temple Gairdner of Cairo and more recently Bishop Kenneth Cragg, both inspired by Henry Martyn, have taken forward.

Today Iranian Christians of the Episcopal Church continue to worship faithfully and we need to remember them in our prayers, even if news is scant. Such support is commended by the Archbishop of Canterbury both in the debate he initiated in the House of Lords last December (see article page 3) and in his commendation of JMECA's initiative this Lent to encourage Good Friday offerings to be donated to support the ministry of the four Episcopal dioceses in the Middle East. This will be developed in future years, so do encourage your parishes to take part.

Do check out our website www.jmeca.org.uk for regular news updates from the Middle East – a complement to the skilled work of the editor of Bible Lands in providing this more permanent journal of reflection, news and record in support of the life and ministry of the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East.

John Pringle, the treasurer, adds:

We are always striving to reduce the administrative costs that are incurred in running the charities. Many of you donate by establishing Standing Orders from your banks. This is most helpful as it avoids the charge made for paying cheques into our account and saves the time it takes to process and acknowledge cheques. Also we are very aware of the big increase in postage costs from 1st May that will affect both cheque donors and all charities.

If you do donate by cheque would you please consider setting up a Standing Order? You have complete control over this method of payment so it can be stopped by a simple request to your bank. Shirley Eason, our Secretary, would be pleased to hear from you and send you the necessary form, or answer any questions you may have. (Tel: 01252726994)

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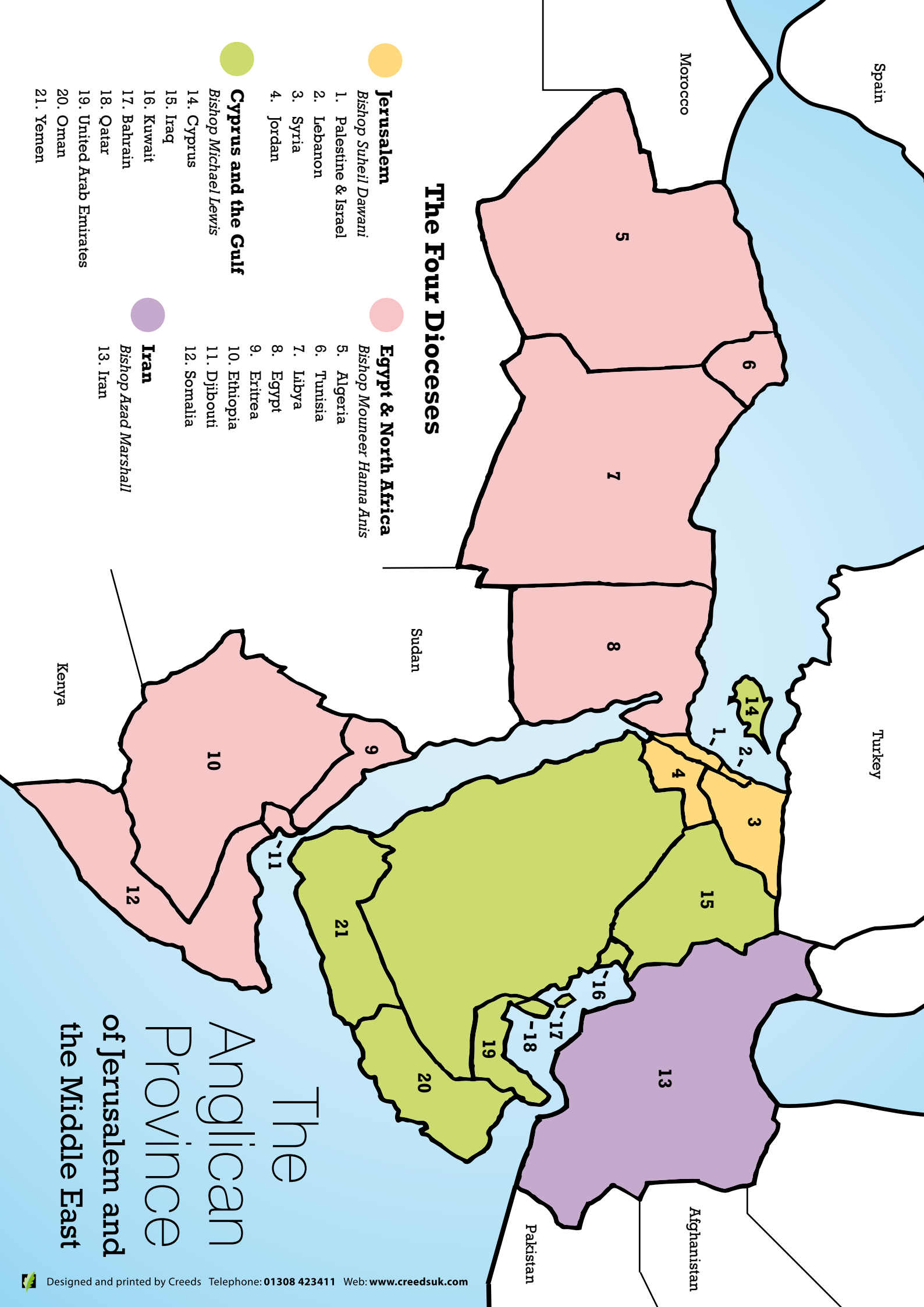
New Dean for Jerusalem



The Bishop in Jerusalem, the Rt.Revd Suheil Dawani, has announced the appointment of The Revd Canon Hosam Naoum as the new Dean of the Cathedral Church of St. George the Martyr in Jerusalem.

Canon Hosam did his first theological training at Rhodes University in South Africa and later a Master of Theology degree in Canon Law at Virginia Theological Seminary in the States. He has served as Canon Pastor of the cathedral for the last seven years which he will continue to do for both the Arabic and English speaking congregations. He was the Acting Dean for three years (2007-9) before his studies in America. The bishop says "Canon Hosam will continue to serve, especially in his capacity as Dean, both the Diocese of Jerusalem and the worldwide Anglican Communion. The Cathedral is the mother church of the Anglican family and will always be a hospitable home and place of worship for many pilgrims and visitors to the Mother City of our faith".

Canon Hosam, who is 38, is married with four children. He was installed on May 17th, the Feast of the Ascension.



Spain

Turkey

Morocco

Afghanistan

Pakistan

Sudan

Kenya

The Four Dioceses

Jerusalem

Bishop Suheil Dawani

1. Palestine & Israel
2. Lebanon
3. Syria
4. Jordan

Egypt & North Africa

Bishop Mounseer Hanna Anis

5. Algeria
6. Tunisia
7. Libya
8. Egypt
9. Eritrea
10. Ethiopia
11. Djibouti
12. Somalia

Cyprus and the Gulf

Bishop Michael Lewis

14. Cyprus
15. Iraq
16. Kuwait
17. Bahrain
18. Qatar
19. United Arab Emirates
20. Oman
21. Yemen

Iran

Bishop Azad Marshall

13. Iran

The
Anglican
Province
of Jerusalem and
the Middle East