



GLASGOW & GALLOWAY

Diocesan News

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Message from Bishop Gregor *Thomas answered Jesus: "My Lord and my God!"*

I REMEMBER many years ago, nearly 50 years ago in fact, my father having a major operation to deal with a peptic ulcer which had plagued him all my childhood and imposed on him both a diet of steamed fish and much, often severe, pain.

The operation was a complete success and gave to him another 25 years of pain-free (and steamed-fish-free) life: wonderful. He was very proud of the scar which told of his experience, of what the doctors had done for him by way of enhancing his life. And he was embarrassingly keen to let you see it; he wanted you to see it.

I imagine that Jesus, when he showed his body to Thomas, as he had shown it to the others, was proud of his scars too, and wanted him to see them, because they would speak to him of who he really was and of what he had gone through for love of the likes of Thomas.

And so Thomas's response, My Lord and my God,

has always moved me. I pray his words every time I gaze upon the consecrated bread and wine as the priest raises them at the end of the Eucharistic prayer as I was taught very long ago to do.

Easter did not obliterate Good Friday, Jesus still had his scars, but now in the context of new and unending life, his terrible death remembered, but now overwhelmed by new, resurrection life. As the risen and exalted Christ says in Revelation: I was dead and, see, I am alive forever and ever (1.18).

These scars on Jesus' body, on his hands, his side and his feet, are still there to show that his human experience, his human life-story, is of permanent significance, is not lost and is not forgotten, even though he has been raised from the dead to new and unending life. The marks came at the end of that life, but they stand for all of it.

What kind of life do they stand for? Well, St John tells us as he states the purpose of his gospel for us: These are written so that you may come to believe Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through this believing you may have life in his name (20.31).

Jesus' was a life that brought life and hope and love to others, through what he taught, what he did, who he is, how he lived and how he died, and above all how he was raised from the dead.

As St John puts it elsewhere – Jesus came that we might have life in all its fullness. It is said of the Spirit in the Creed, but it can equally be said of Jesus himself – he is life-giver.

In the season of Easter, the most joyous time of the Christian year, we celebrate the victory of Christ's life-giving life over human commitment to other, life-denying ways, and over death itself. Easter recalls us with hope to the conviction that, as with Jesus, so with us in his company: life-giving lives on earth will be taken up into the new and unending life that is resurrection.

Date set for youth camps

THIS year's two SEC Youth Camp weeks at Glenalmond College, Perthshire, begin on Sunday 27 July and Sunday 3 August.

The 'Glen Weeks' are for young people and leaders from across the Province to gather for fellowship, worship, activities, arts and crafts workshops, sports, and fun evening events.

Participants join house-groups of people their own age which meet twice a day to discuss study material focused on Bible passages.

Each group plans its own worship to share each evening.

Faith is explored, with differing views and experiences encouraged.

The days are also made up of morning workshops, afternoon activities, worship and then evening events – with plenty of time to socialise.

Says ministry development officer Ann Tomlinson: "Last year's programme deepened the liturgical knowledge of many younger members of our charges, heightened their appreciation of what occurs in weekly worship and once back in their home charges, led (where encouraged by vestries and congregations) to increased participation in worship leadership roles."

The deadline for applications is 2 June. Contact Revd Tembu Rongong: rector@stpj.org.uk.

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A week of eating on £1 a day

Out on a limb on same-sex marriage?

Prisoners to help victims of violence

Parliament takes steps on pilgrim way

Holyrood may put Scots pilgrimage on Euro-map

THE Scottish Government is to back a bid to put pilgrimage in south-west Scotland on the European map.

In a parliamentary business debate, Fiona Hislop, Secretary for Culture and External Affairs, pledged support from her officials for seeking European Cultural Route status for the embryonic 'St Ninian Ways'.

She was responding on behalf of the Scottish Government to a proposal from MSP Aileen McLeod.

The St Ninian Ways will revive a number of pilgrim trails to Whithorn in Wigtownshire – known as the cradle of Scottish Christianity.

It was Ayr-based heritage tourism researcher James Brown who originally proposed that the St Ninian Ways be candidates for the coveted accreditation from the

Council of Europe. There are only about 24 European Cultural Routes, the *Camino de Santiago de Compostela* being the first and best known.

Dr McLeod, SNP member for the South of Scotland, is delighted at the reaction to her proposal, which won cross-party support.

She said: "By establishing the St Ninian Ways, with Whithorn as their destination, and seeking European Cultural Route status for them, I hope that we can dramatically boost Whithorn's profile as an important historical site, not only for Scotland, but for the development of Christianity in western Europe.

"I am delighted therefore that the Cabinet Secretary undertook that her officials will start work with all of the groups which will

need to be brought together in order to make a bid for European Cultural Route status possible, and also that she will ask the Environment Minister to assist with land and transportation issues.

"This is a great step forward for this big idea. Although there will be a great deal of hard work to come, I am very pleased that we have started off in the right way, with cross-party support from the Parliament and the Scottish Government."

James Brown added: "Already many people have helped to bring one of the routes – from Glasgow through Paisley and Ayrshire – close to being a formal entity. The desire to experience the spiritual benefits of pilgrimage is clearly growing, and it is equally shared by people with no faith background."

Heavy hearts as wee church opts to close

THE Episcopal congregation of St John's Girvan will end their services in the town at the end of April.

Members have been worshipping in the town's Methodist church for more than five years, after structural problems led to the closure of their own 1859 building.

The decision was made by the congregation of St John's, the smallest of the three South Ayrshire Team churches. (The others are St Oswald's Maybole and Holy Trinity Ayr.)

Team rector Andrew Baldock said: "With very heavy hearts it was unanimously decided that it was not a viable proposition to carry on attempts to grow the small congregation, who have tried their very best to revive the church in recent years.

"Personally I very obviously hope that the remaining members of St John's will find a spiritual home in one of our other two churches, and trust that we will smooth that transition for those who decide before God so to do."

He added: "Bishop Gregor and the Dean are aware of this development and will be working with us on the technicalities of the closure, not least of which will be a final united service on a date to be decided."

After failing to find a buyer, the former St John's building was demolished in 2012. The grounds are still on the market with planning consent for residential development.

Cross-border meeting for Mission Action Planners

ONE of the main thrusts of the Whole Church Mission and Ministry Policy is the encouragement of near-neighbour relationships between dioceses and the closer working together of like-minded practitioners.

The Home Mission Committee has been working towards establishing 'light-touch networks' in a number of areas relating to mission and ministry, aimed at the sharing of information, planning and good practice. One such is a network of those involved in Mission Action Planning or its equivalent brand in other dioceses – and so in June we are planning a gathering for those involved in this work in at least two, if not four, dioceses.

MAP facilitators from the dioceses of St Andrews, Dunkeld & Dunblane and Glasgow & Galloway will join together on 28 June to celebrate and evaluate where they are on their respective MAP journeys; learn from each other's experiences; and plan future moves. It is hoped that representatives from Edinburgh and Argyll will also be present on this occasion. The day will be held in All Saints Bearden, chosen as a mid-point between Galloway and rural Perthshire and well served by public transport of several kinds.

While on the subject of missional gatherings, the next Glasgow & Galloway gathering to celebrate our strategic intention for growth will be on Saturday 23 May 2015, the eve of Pentecost. More details in due course, but do get the date into your diary now!

*Canon Anne Tomlinson,
ministry development officer*

Is Church out on a limb on same-sex marriage?

A **REVOLUTION in social attitudes** to same-sex relationships has left many religious organisations looking isolated according to John Curtice in an address to diocesan Synod.

Professor Curtice, of Strathclyde University, was giving an overview of changing public attitudes towards same-sex marriage and relationships in Scotland.

Drawing from research data accrued within Scotland and across Britain over the last 30 years on changing attitudes, he concluded that most people in Scottish society now accept or approve of marriage as an option for same-sex couples. In 1987, about three-quarters of Brits thought same-sex relationships were always or mostly wrong. By 2010, only 27% of people surveyed in Scotland held that view.

It also emerged that society generally accepts pre-marital childbirth now, but is more censorious of infidelity than a generation ago.

However, people of faith in Scotland today are very much less likely than others to approve of same-sex marriage. This might reflect a higher proportion of people among church communities who are old enough to remember when gay sex was illegal. Or, as Professor Curtice suggested: "Often, symbols are more powerful than substance."

You can see the findings and underlying statistics that Professor Curtice presented to diocesan Synod online. They are set out in his recent submission to the Scottish Parliament in advance of the Marriage and Civil Partnership Bill (Scotland).

He concluded: "There has been a dramatic and quite recent change in attitudes towards same-sex relationships.

"That has left some sections of society behind, and many religious organisations looking rather isolated.

"Now a (not overwhelming?) majority [are] for equal marriage – as a dichotomous choice – and some would still be content with just civil partnerships."

To see Professor Curtice's Parliamentary submission, visit: <http://tinyurl.com/qbhsrpm>.

Stories of young vocation

RECENTLY published by SPCK is *Hearing the Call – Stories of Young Vocation* by Gordon Mursell and Jonathan Lawson.

The difference between going into the ministry at the age of 20 or 30, rather than 40 or 50, might simply be that someone asked sooner rather than later, 'Have you thought of being ordained?'

It is easy, especially for young people, to feel they might be inadequate for the job, but the Bible is littered with stories of individuals who didn't feel up to what God called them to be.

Bishop Mursell's reflections on several relevant Biblical passages complement Jonathan Lawson's recounting of his wide experience of young vocations. He illustrates

this with real-life stories from young people he has counselled and encouraged.

Rowan Williams writes in the foreword:

"In this very good book, you'll find a readiness to start from where you are, to take your experience of faith and trust seriously, and to offer some resources and a bit of a framework to make fuller sense of it.

"I hope and pray that as you read it you'll catch some of the excitement there is in recognising these moments of opening up and new possibility."

Rt Revd Gordon Mursell is an honorary assistant bishop in Glasgow & Galloway. He was suffragan Bishop of Stafford until 2010.

DAY ON MUSIC FOR SMALL CHURCHES

THE Learning and Discipleship Development Team invite you to *Music for Small Churches*: a day of exploring

background, resources and ideas.

It will take place 10am-3pm on Saturday 17 May at the Church of the Holy Name, in Cumbernauld.

Free lunch is included.

Please assist those planning the catering by booking your place with the Diocesan Centre: 0141 221 5720.

New publication explores ethics and sustainability

THE John Ray Initiative (JRI) has published a 44-page paper, *Sustainability and Ethics*, by Ian Arbon and John Weaver.

Professor Ian Arbon, a worship leader in the South Ayrshire Team, is an engineer and former chair of JRI. John Weaver is a theologian and is the present chair of JRI.

The central section of the paper, 'Approaches and Responses', is by Ian Arbon, and includes Defining sustainability; Development of the concept of sustainability; PESTE (political, economic; societal, technological and environmental) analysis; Technology; Politics; Relationship between sustainability and ethics; Environmental ethics; Business ethics; and Sustainability and ethics in practice (from the field of energy).

John Weaver concludes the paper with a theological reflection with sections on: Seeking a way forward; Ethical perspectives; A theological perspective; and Action for Christian disciples.

The paper has been produced in association with the Industrial Christian Fellowship.

To order a copy send a £3.50 cheque made out to the John Ray Initiative to JRI, Wotton House, Horton Road, Gloucester, GL1 3PT.

Week of porridge and veg soup for Becky's £5 diet

YOUR diocesan architect has pledged to try surviving on a £1-a-day food budget.

Rebecca Cadie's mission is part of *Living Below the Line*, an initiative from a group of charities to raise funds as well as awareness about poverty and food justice.

Known at church (St Oswald's Maybole) by her married name, Becky Fleming, she'll be taking up the challenge during Save the Children Week, 28 April to 2 May. She is looking for sponsors and others to join her in a week of porridge and veg soup.

Sponsor her online at <http://tinyurl.com/odqna9j> or sign up yourself. The same link gives information, sponsor sheets and recipes.

The money she raises will go to Save the Children's action against poverty in the UK and 120 countries around the world.

Prisoners to help victims of violence start afresh

Prisoners are set to help families made homeless because of abuse to make a new start, thanks to a simple initiative from Mothers' Union. Ann Glenesk explains how it came about...

THE mission of Mothers' Union members across the diocese is based on three key words: Prayer, Enabling and Campaigning.

The mission of members in East Dunbartonshire includes service at HMP Low Moss and Women's Refuges. The practice of members is to invite our mission partners to worship God alongside us at our annual Festival Service. In 2013 our Festival Service was hosted by St James the Less, Bishopbriggs. Among the guests, therefore, were staff from both HMP Low Moss and East Dunbartonshire Women's Aid. Following worship, both groups spoke of how they could forge links to improve the lot of both their client groups.

Security and reducing re-offending are the key concerns of staff at the prison, and part of this is providing opportunities for prisoners to contribute in a positive way to the community.

Prisoners have responded enthusiastically to helping families made homeless by domestic abuse. Men with carpentry and joinery skills and those with artistic talent are keen to show goodwill by making coffee tables, bookcases and paintings which will help furnish homes. Families in the refuges are grateful to know that their plight is taken seriously by prisoners and grateful to have help in furnishing their homes, often starting with the basic components.

The work of the prisoners will support the Fresh Start initiative which has Scottish Church Housing, local councils and local churches working together to help families starting again.

Where is MU in all this? As diocesan president of the organisation, the question I would rather pose is Where is God in all this? St Paul reminds us that our ways are not God's ways. Members try to bear in mind the words of St Paul in his letter to the Philippians – value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests, but each of you to the interests of the others. MU members have relationships with these two staff and client groups and we extended an invitation to worship.

What is happening following our invitation is God's work.

As MU diocesan president, Ann Glenesk serves on the Children's and Families' Strategy Group at HMP Low Moss and chairs East Dunbartonshire Women's Aid.

Spring days at Ignatian Spirituality Centre

BREAD BROKEN AND SHARED... On Saturday 12 April (10.30am–4.30pm) Margaret Linforth will lead a day celebrating the Bread of Life by making bread and reflecting together.

RETREAT IN DAILY LIFE... This individually guided retreat will be run over seven weeks. After an opening session on Thursday 1 May (3–5pm or 7–9pm), each person will meet with a prayer companion once a week. The retreat will end with a group meeting on Thursday 12 June.

ART, LAUGHTER AND LIFE... On Saturday 7 June (10.30am–4.30pm) Melitta Bosworth and Katy Low will lead a day to enjoy and celebrate life with easy introductions to ways of reflecting with a variety of art materials. No artistic expertise is needed and all materials will be provided.

For more information about these and other events visit www.iscglasgow.co.uk or contact ISC, 35 Scott Street, Glasgow G3 6PE, admin@iscglasgow.co.uk, 0141 354 0077.

Indy expert to give talk at St Mary's

IS Scotland set to separate?

That's the topic when Professor John Curtice delivers the annual St Mary's Lecture in Bridge of Weir next month.

Renowned as an expert on the call for Scottish independence, John Curtice, professor of politics at Strathclyde University, will share the latest information on voting expectations for the Referendum, and much more besides.

You can read his non-partisan blog at whatscotlandthinks.org.

Following the lecture, he will answer questions and there will be an opportunity to talk informally over refreshments.

The event is in St Mary's Church (PA11 3RA) at 7pm on Tuesday 6 May. For further information contact Gill Reynolds (gill.reynolds3@btinternet.com or 01505 842629).

News and events in brief . . .

PLACES are swiftly getting booked up for next year's pilgrimage to the Holy Land with Revd Cedric Blakey and Bishop Gregor, 11-22 May. It will be possible to take up to 35 people.

Contact Cedric for details and a booking form: email viceprovost@thecathedral.org.uk or phone/text 0758 006 8328.

IF you can offer a bed to one of the Commonwealth Games volunteers or athletes' family members within an hour of the venues, contact Revd Cedric Blakey on viceprovost@thecathedral.org.uk for information. The Games take place 23 July–3 August.

For further information and ideas to make the most of the biggest event in Scotland for years, keep an eye on morethangold2014.org.uk.

THE More than Gold press team is seeking interns to work during the Commonwealth Games. To request details and an application form contact pressteam@morethangold2014.org.uk.

CENTENARY celebrations continue at St Margaret's Renfrew with a concert on Friday 25 April featuring the Renfrew Burgh Band. The concert will begin at 7.30pm in the church. En-

try is £5 and this includes refreshments in the hall.

AT St Columba's Largs there is a Passiontide Taizé service at 4pm on Sunday 6 April. Refreshments will follow this service of song, silence and reflection. The address is Aubery Crescent, KA30 8PR.

THERE is a car boot sale in the grounds of St Columba's Largs, 10am-1pm on Saturday, 26 April. Refreshments will be available in the church hall.

Donations from buyers are welcome at the gate. Sellers may set up from 8.30am and are invited to contribute the following: car £7, van £11, car & table £9, table only £5. Booking is recommended: call 01475 686213

THE 40th annual Scottish Pilgrimage to the Anglican Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham takes place Friday-Monday, 26-29 September.

The cost, including coach travel, will be £280 (half-board).

All are welcome. Contact Fr Gordon Fyfe: 01475 673143, gordon.fyfe@virginmedia.com.

REV D Alison Jones was licensed as part-time associate priest for the newly linked charges of St Mungo's Alexandria and St Augustine's Dumbarton in

February. Revd Kenny Macaulay, who has been rector of St Augustine's Dumbarton is now rector of both charges.

REV D Cedric Blakey, vice provost of St Mary's Cathedral, is the new diocesan interfaith adviser for the next three years. He succeeds Revd Andrew Richardson in this role.

IN Troon, the St Ninian's Easter Day celebrations will include the dedication of the Centenary Memorial Path in the church grounds.

Meantime, members are basing their group Lent study on the film *Chocolat*, following Hilary Brand's book, *Christ and the Chocolaterie*. Their course is divided into five sessions thinking about change: the possibility, the power of acceptance and the process of change.

THE Scottish Episcopal Church and Christian Aid have come together to launch a cookbook for Lent 2014. It is free, but all donations will go to Christian Aid. It can be downloaded from christianaid.org.uk/scotland/index.aspx. Printed copies can be ordered from the General Synod Office (0131 225 6357). Postage costs will be applied.

REACHING Out is a day exploring how we can impact social policy through faith in action. Led by Mothers' Union faith and policy team, it is for clergy, congregation members and Mothers' Union members.

It takes place at St Ninian's Cathedral, Perth, on Tuesday 27 May, 10.30am–3pm. Tea and coffee will be provided; participants should bring their own lunch.

Book by 25 April with Ann Glenesk: ann.glenesk@ntlworld.com.

THE last two Saturday lunch-time Lent meetings at Elshieshields, near Lockerbie, will be on 5 April and 12 April. Coffee from 11.30am, talk 12noon

Chance to make a guided retreat in daily life

RETREAT in Daily Life from Easter to Pentecost is a retreat experience woven into everyday life that offers a time to pause, reflect and refocus.

Based in Galloway, it is led by Rachel Inglis. She says: "Participants can try out new ways of praying and become more aware of connections between faith, prayer and everyday life.

"There are three elements to the retreat, starting with an introductory meeting on Saturday, 26 April in Kirkcudbright, where you will meet the other retreatants and your prayer guide. You have five weekly 30-minute one-to-one meetings with your guide and in between take time yourself to pray and reflect in a way that feels intentional and manageable in your daily routine.

"The retreat concludes on Saturday 7 June in Castle Douglas, where we reflect on what has emerged in this time of retreat."

A voluntary contribution of £10 is suggested. For information and to book, contact Rachel: info@aigfois.co.uk.

Falling student numbers force college closure

to 12.45pm, followed by discussion over lunch. Participants should bring their own sandwiches and are invited to stay on to enjoy the place if they wish.

On 5 April Revd Steven Ballard will speak on Rudolph Otto and the idea of holiness: can Otto's ideas help us in understanding other faiths?

On 12 April Canon Michael Bands speaks about the Desert Fathers.

For more information contact ann.shukman@virgin.net.

THE Bishop has chosen Yorkhill Children's Charity to benefit from the diocesan Lent Appeal this year.

Every year over 160,000 children attend the Royal Hospital for Sick Children at Yorkhill, from all areas of Scotland as well as some from England and Ireland.

The work of the charity is to make the experience as pleasant and comfortable as it can be for patients and their families.

Recent projects include emergency travel grants to families in need; a specialised wheelchair for children with cerebral palsy; a paediatric special-care ambulance; 'clowndoctors'; wall-mounted DVD players to distract patients from their treatments; funding bereavement support for families; and maintaining onsite primary and secondary classrooms and teaching resources.

ST John's Stranraer recently raised £550 with a concert in aid of Apex Scotland's local work.

The congregation has been supporting Apex for a number of years, underwriting its food voucher scheme for people in need.

Apex has now formalised a food bank under the guidance of the Trussell Trust and, in conjunction with its 'Moving In' project, can now offer a wide range of services to anyone who is homeless or otherwise in need.

INTERNATIONAL Christian College is to cease its current educational operations over the next academic year.

Principal Richard Tiplady said: "There will be no further new student intakes, and we will help our current students to transfer to other institutions where possible, as well as providing one final year of teaching for some students in order to help them to complete their studies."

Based in Glasgow, the college came into being in 1998 through the merger of Glasgow Bible College and Northumbria Bible College. Its 45,000-volume library contains part of the former library of the Theological Institute of the Scottish Episcopal Church, and has continued to lend publications to aid the study of SEC members.

With declining student intakes, the college sold its building and cut staff numbers last year, but has been unable to find suitable and affordable premises for the long-term.

"It would be unfair in these circumstances to allow new students to begin their studies with us if there were real doubts that the college might not be around long enough for them to complete them," Revd Tiplady added.

"In the light of this, the college's board of directors consider that the right course of action is to cease our educational programmes and work on a managed transition or exit for our current students.

"We will move into a small suite of offices, classroom and library facilities for one final year of teaching. We will also begin a process of reflection, listening, prayer and discernment before deciding how the college's remaining financial and library assets should be used.

"We do not believe that this is the end of the college's ministry, but that it may take a different form in future."

Glasgow & Galloway ministry development officer Anne Tomlinson commented: "Let us hold Principal Richard and his staff in our prayers as they engage in this period of reflection, at a time of personal upheaval for them and in the context of an even wider – and alarming – shaking of the foundations of the provision of theological education in Scotland at tertiary level."

September date for Ministries Celebration service

THIS year's Ministries Celebration service, when as a diocese we give thanks for the range of licensed and authorised lay ministries in our midst, will be held in St John the Evangelist, Dumfries, on Saturday 20 September.

Lunch will be available at 12 noon, with the service beginning at 1.15pm.

The service has traditionally been held in the early summer, but, at the request of the Lay Readers, it is being moved to the autumn instead.

This is so that Readers who graduate at the end of the July Summer School, can be licensed together at a significant diocesan service, in the same way that ordinands are deaconed at a diocesan service shortly after completion of their studies at the Theological Institute of the Scottish Episcopal Church.

NEXT ISSUE OF GLASGOW & GALLOWAY DIOCESAN NEWS

ITEMS for the May issue may be submitted by **Monday 14 April** as ordinary prose (*not* leaflets, adverts, posters or PDFs, please) to the editor, Susi Cormack Brown, c/o Diocesan Centre, 5 St Vincent Place, Glasgow G1 2DH, or dns@episcopalglasgow.co.uk.

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