



Columcille

**The Bishop of Argyll
And The Isles' Newsletter. No 37**

February 2009

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Dear Friends,

As I write this letter the agonising circumstances of the War in the Gaza Strip not only punctuates the news every day, but increasingly threatens to have implications in the Middle East as a whole. This in turn may well spill over to new crises which will stretch not only the new administration in Washington but place huge demands on statesmen and women throughout the world. As Christians, have we thought clearly and urgently enough about peace and peacemaking? With contemporary weaponry and lack of political vision? I seriously doubt whether the arguments for "Just War" theories have much credence in our own time. Perhaps you and your congregations might get together in small groups with Christians from other denominations to share views and do some thinking and praying on these issues. I believe firmly that such work in small local circumstances can have a radiating effect beyond our own horizons. If you would like some reading to stimulate such conversations please do get in touch with me.

Diocesan Synod, The Diocesan Centre – 4th March 2009

A) Letters of Invitation – Very shortly we will be sending out letters of invitation to the Diocesan Synod, the pre-Synod Day (see below) and the post-Synod Day for the Clergy.

B) Accommodation – Once again there will be members of St John's Cathedral in Oban will be offering accommodation. If you wish to take this up for the next Synod please get in touch with Mrs Sarah Campbell at 01631 562397.

Those who wish to book a bed and breakfast please remember that the limit is £35 per night. If you have difficulties making such arrangements please get in touch with the Diocesan office (01631 570870). Further information will be available in the Synod papers.

C) Pre-Synod Day – 3rd March 10am for 10.30am. The Diocesan Centre

i) The focus of the day will be on two subjects. "Lay Learning" with the Provincial Lay Learning Officer David Liddle. ii) Administration development in the Diocese and our charges, with Chris Todhunter on the issues of Vestries and trusteeship and Peter Kemp on Diocesan administration working with the charges, iii) Jean Ainsley our Diocesan accountant will have a session with the charge treasurers, iv) Murdoch Gatward will lead a session on Fairtrade.

D) Synod Eucharist – 3rd March 5.45pm. St John's Cathedral, Oban.

E) The Synod Dinner – 3rd March 7pm for 7.30pm. The Gathering Hall, Oban.

F) The Post Synod Day 5th March– for all Ordained Clergy in the Diocese, The Diocesan Centre. Canon Ian Paton will be helping us with Creative Liturgy in Rural and Remote Congregations.

Diocese of Argyll & The Isles Prayer Cycle 2009-2010

Please look at the current Prayer Cycle, make a note of any changes that need to be made related to your charge and let me know as soon as possible so that alterations can appear. The new Prayer Cycles will be available at The Diocesan Synod.

PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE 2009 – “Living Well” – 2nd- 4th October Aviemore.

Register by the 14th of February!

The conference liaison person for our Diocese, Margaret Dineley writes: “Preparations for the Provincial Conference are well underway. May I encourage you to join in the stimulation, spirituality and fellowship which this event offers?”

Location – The MacDonald Highland Resort, Aviemore.

Theme: “*Living Well: Proclaim, Discover, Respond*” The underpinning Bible passage is St John 4: 3-43; the Woman at the Well narrative, which tells of the transformation in the woman by this encounter with Christ. The five Marks of Mission are also addressed and the speakers are The Right Rev’d Stephen Cottrell, Bishop of Reading; Annabel Goldie, MSP and The Rev’d Erik Cramb of The Church of Scotland.

Cost - £295 per person for single occupancy, £265 for double occupancy. The costs will be split three ways – between the participants, their vestry and the Diocese. If anyone is prevented from applying by their own or their vestry’s financial difficulties they should contact the Diocesan secretary.

Registration Forms – These have been sent to the Clergy of each charge. It would be helpful if they could be returned to the Diocesan Office as soon as possible. There are only 300 places for the whole Province. Any further questions contact Margaret Dineley, The Coach House, Toward, Argyll, PA23 7UB, 01639 870073. Email margaret.dineley@googlemail.com

Lent Appeal – Zimbabwe Crisis

As you will be well aware, there is not only financial collapse, expanding poverty but also the spread of cholera in and beyond Zimbabwe. Christian Aid is one of the agencies drawing attention to the practical needs of communities in the country. The Bishops Lent Appeal will be for Christian Aid Zimbabwe Crisis Appeal. Whether in your congregation or personally please make sure as many people know about this Lent appeal as possible. If you are using a jam jar or tin please contact Sue Pollard at The Diocesan office for labels. Tel no 01631 570870 or office@argyll.anglican.org

Lent Lunches – In support of the Bishop’s Lent Appeal, once again there will be Lent Lunches. This year these lunches will be held at The Pines, Ardconnel Road, Oban (The Bishop’s House) because we no longer have permission to use the Diocesan Centre because of Health and Safety regulations. The lunches will be from 12.30pm to 1.30pm on the following FRIDAYS of Lent: 27th Feb; 6th March; 13th March; 20th March; 27th March; 3rd April. [There will be no Lent Lunch in Holy Week]. If anyone is prevented from coming because of the climb to The Pines, please let us know and we will try to arrange a lift.

Royal School of Church Music – Sing Columba! 7th March 2009

The first Sing Columba! event will take place in Dunblane Cathedral from 2.30-5.30pm. For details contact Pat on 01620 892228.

Companions Together Worldwide

A Day for exploring Companion Links – Saturday March 21st 2009 at The Albany Centre, Glasgow G4

This day conference will be hosted by the Provincial Overseas Committee of The Scottish Episcopal Church, to explore International Companion links and to share experiences and information. For details of

the day please contact gill.young@ukonline.co.uk More details about this event are also available on our Diocesan website.

THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE DIOCESAN MAGAZINE "ARGYLL AND THE ISLES"!

Please send me articles and photographs for the next magazine. Closing date - February 27th 2009.

To save time it would be helpful if you would proof read them yourself and have something of the editor's hat on your head!

Planning For Lent -

1. The Bible Reading Fellowship have a simple course for individual use or for groups which you might like to consider for Lent. See the website wwwFOUNDATIONS21.org.uk

2. There is a course on audio CDs on themes of basic importance to all Christians. Brian Daley a Jesuit Priest has recorded one course called "Early Christianity and The First Christians". There are 18 topics on six audio CDs. Perhaps your charge would be interested in buying a set of these CDs and a small group perhaps listen to them together. You can order the CDs from www.NowYouKnowMedia.com

If you are going to use them please do let me know so that I can share the process with you and be of whatever help I can.

Christianity: A History.

Channel 4 Television is putting on a long series of programmes on this subject which are highly acclaimed, each Sunday evening at 7pm.

A Conference on Homosexuality and The Scottish Episcopal Church – May 2nd 2009, Kemnay Church Centre, Aberdeenshire.

The Diocese of Aberdeen and Orkney are organising a day of discussion and listening on this subject for that Diocese. It

will be chaired by Bishop Bob Gillies and Bishop David Chillingworth will be the lead speaker. There are two places for people from this Diocese. If you would like to participate then please telephone the Aberdeen and Orkney Diocesan Office – 01224 662247.

The Diocesan Festival – The Year of Homecoming

Sunday 7th June 2009 at St John's Cathedral, Oban 10.30am-3.30pm

Homecoming Scotland 2009 celebrates the 250th anniversary of Robert Burns' birth with a year-long programme of events across the country. The date I have chosen is the nearest Sunday to the Feast of Saint Columba. So I hope that you and your charge will support this event. The provisional programme for the day is that at 10.30am after coffee there will be some singing and some rehearsal for the Festival Eucharist which will be at 12noon. The preacher will be The Right Reverend Richard Holloway. The Sunday schools and junior churches of the Diocese will be involved. Please put the dates in your diaries.

Pilgrim Adventure –

This organisation is advertising pilgrim destinations throughout the UK. It was founded in 1987 to take folk off the beaten track to experience God in the wideness and intimacy of God's creation. If you are interested in knowing more the website is www.pilgrim-adventure.org.uk

Back to Church Sunday 27th Sept. 2009

For the last few years in England there has been a successful ecumenical process of inviting new people to come to church or

indeed those who have left it for one reason or another. Some Diocese in Scotland have already participated. However every denomination in Scotland will be participating on the 27th September 2009. The basic idea is that each member of a congregation invites one friend to come to church on that Sunday. The service itself is not expected to be special. Our Diocesan Board of Mission and Ministry will be providing resources in preparation for the Sunday in the New Year. Please put the date in your diaries.

The Cathedral of The Isles, Cumbrae - Retreat, Music and Conference Programme 2009

For information see

www.island-retreats.org

THE BISHOP'S February Diary

Sunday 1st – Preach at Glenalmond College

Monday 2nd – Friday 6th Experiencing the life of Glenalmond College

Sunday 8th – St Columba's, Gruline, Isle of Mull

Tuesday 10th/Wednesday 11th – College of Bishop's, Kinnoull, Perth

Friday 13th – Clan Donald Memorial Service, Glencoe

Saturday 14th - Quiet Day for St Andrew's Church, St Andrews.

Tuesday 17th – Island Retreats Board meeting, Diocesan Centre

Thursday 19th – Provincial Doctrine Committee, Edinburgh

Friday 20th – Meeting on Canons, Glasgow.

Friday 20th – St John's Cathedral Choir – annual dinner, Oban.

Saturday 21st and Sunday 22nd – St Columba's, Gruline, Isle of Mull (AGM and Liturgy)

Wednesday 25th and Thursday 26th – Dalriada Region residential meeting, Lochgilphead

Reflection

The Spirit and the Wilderness

Even Jesus, free as he was from inertia like mine, needed the full force of the Wind of God (Spirit, Breath, Wind are all equally valid translations of the Greek word *pneuma*) to make him enter the testing-ground of the wilderness. If I am going to go forward into that truth for which God knows I am ready at this point in my life I am going to need the Spirit to drive me.

The truth we are promised if we live the demands of this season of Lent consists not in new furniture for the mind, but in exposure to the reality of God's presence in ourselves and the world.

.(Martin Smith)

In the Love of God, +Martin, Oban

<p>The March Newsletter – material to be received by Tuesday 24th February 2009</p>

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