

Diocesan Visit to Gothenburg 4 - 7 May, 2007

I was invited as Convenor of the Diocesan Spirituality Group to join the party to our link Diocese of Gothenburg. Eight of us travelled together. The purpose of the visit was to be part of the Celebration of their 70th Anniversary of the Diocesan Conference and Youth Centre. Set in isolation along a wooded inlet it had accommodation for 220 people. Opened as a Christian Youth Hostel, it has developed over the years into an hotel like complex that is used for conferences as well as its programme for 6,000 young people each year. Each young person goes for two separate weeks and a weekend as part of their preparation for Confirmation! The Bishop of Gothenburg's vision is to develop the centre to include the facility for running retreats. The reason why we were there was to share our experience of retreats. However, the opportunity for in-depth sharing and conversation was rather overtaken by the wider celebration and little time was available.

We arrived in the early evening with hardly enough time before dinner to tell our experience of retreats. The next morning there was a celebration of the Eucharist at which Bishop Idris presided. The service was all very familiar and the Diocese had been influenced in the 1980s by the work of David Watson at St Michael le Belfry, York, so that some of the hymns we knew, although in Swedish. After a break for coffee and refreshments, we returned for speeches in Swedish! We had an able translator and the focus was on the history of the Centre. After a break Bishop Carl Axel gave his vision of the development of the Centre. I understand that some of what he said was influenced by what he had heard from our group.

After a celebratory lunch our individual hosts took us to their homes for two nights. Shelley Marsh and I travelled south of Gothenburg to a small town on the coast and were made most welcome in the home of the Diocesan Publicity Officer and his wife, a Deacon in the Diocese. Church on Sunday morning was different! Family service led by the youth worker making a cake; happy clappy songs and a very relaxed atmosphere!

We returned to the Diocesan Centre in down town Gothenburg on Monday morning where we were met and taken on a sight seeing trip round the city. A city built because of trade; has a shipbuilding history, even a derelict crane as monument to that; on a river where large ships come right into its centre; where trams run and people live cheek by jowl with business.

The highlight was to discover how at home I felt in the regular worship of the Church - nothing much was different!

Edith E Thorp

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Glasgow & Galloway Diocesan News

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Jesus replied, "I am the way; I am the truth and I am life; no one comes to the Father except by me.

John 14.6

People of the Way

Just two weeks ago I was privileged to be part of the Diocesan group sharing in the 'Growing Together' experience. (Just in case there is still anyone who hasn't heard of this, it was bringing together 5 people from our Diocese and 5 each from our two companion Diocese of Byumba and Kentucky.)

Our first two days together were spent in Galloway where we visited Sweetheart and Dundrennan Abbeys and Greyfriars Church in Kirkcudbright before being royally entertained with a Scottish meal and a ceilidh in Castle Douglas, all interspersed with worship and opportunity to get to know one another. The third day took us back into Ayrshire and over to Millport where we were ably led in a process of growing and understanding our mission and outreach in our own land and together in the world.

As we travelled together, visiting the past, sharing in the present and looking to the future, I was reminded time and time again that the early Christians were known as 'People of the Way'; people who were following a particular path, journeying and on the move. People who travelled together nurturing and spreading the Word of God and the good news of the Resurrection. People with a sense of purpose! And that, in a nutshell, sums up much of what I have learned throughout this time together. We may have our differences in theological interpretation and belief, and some of that is threatening our Anglican Communion, but together we are 'on the Way', travelling together as we seek to be God's people in today's world. In Byumba there are very obvious needs and people turn to the church for help, which tends to make their role in mission clearer. For us here in Scotland and perhaps in Kentucky, the story is different and although there are definite needs, the church is usually not the first place people turn to for help. We need to reach out to them.

Visiting the ruined abbeys in Galloway we are reminded of how those who went before us sought to live out their Christian faith and witness. They stand as monuments to the past, to an era where the church was the centre of community life, providing food, nurture and security. The centuries have moved on and I wonder what our legacy to the future will be. Will people in centuries to come be able to find examples of our Christian faith and witness? And I am not advocating building abbeys! It seems to me that we have forgotten that we are meant to be 'People of the Way', people moving forward in our search for truth in times when the church as

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we know it is rapidly declining. Perhaps it is easier to cling to the past than to go forward into what may seem to be an uncertain future, but our call is to follow where our Master leads us and we have His promise to hold on to as we take each step along the way. 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life', Jesus said, and He also said 'follow me.'

So let us build on the heritage of the past but not cling to it. Our mission is to the people of today and to build the church of the future, learning and seeking as we travel together rekindling our sense of purpose for we know whose we are and whom we seek to serve. To quote from another of my favourites, as People of the Way, 'let us boldly go where no one has gone before' with our eyes firmly fixed on Jesus whom we have the privilege to serve today.

*Revd Canon Jeanette Jenkins
North Ayrshire Team*

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St Bartholomew's celebrates its 150th Birthday

St Bartholomew's Church is one of the gems of Gourock ~ a small and beautiful church building commanding superb views over Gourock and the Firth of Clyde to sea lochs and the Highlands. This year the church is celebrating its 150th anniversary.

The main events to mark the occasion will take place during St Bartholomew's weekend, Friday 24th to Sunday 26th August. These will include a Cabaret concert and supper, and a special service to give thanks for the church's 150 years life and work in Gourock. Our guest of honour will be the Right Revd John M Taylor, retired Bishop of Glasgow & Galloway.

Any readers with past connections to St Bartholomew's are asked to look out any memorabilia connected with the church ~ e.g. wedding photographs, confirmation certificates or Boys Brigade materials. We would very much like to borrow such articles for a display of the church's past life.

Please send any memorabilia to Evan Williams, Treasurer, c/o Seacroft, Eglinton Terrace, Skelmorlie, Ayrshire PA17 5ER
e-mail: evanseacroft@btinternet.com

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Holy Trinity Arts & Ayr Arts Guild Present

'Celebrating Schubert'

a festival of concerts and recitals
based on the music of Franz Schubert
at Holy Trinity Church,
Fullarton Street, Ayr.

Saturday 2nd June

Peter Seivewright (piano)

Sunday 3rd June

Choral Evensong

Sunday 10th June

Holy Trinity Festival Choir and
Ayrshire Symphony Orchestra

Saturday 16th June

'A Schubert Whigmaleerie'

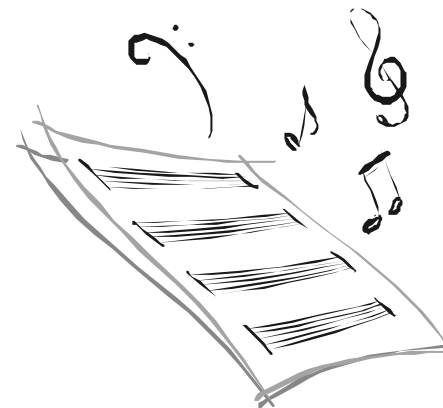
Sunday 17th June

Holy Trinity Chamber Ensemble

Saturday 23rd June

Peter Seivewright (piano)

Full details in the 'concerts' section of
Holy Trinity website
www.episcopalsouthayrshire.org.uk



WEST END FESTIVAL Events at St Mary's Cathedral

Sunday 10th June

Concert: 4.00 pm - Admission Free
Scottish Voices & Symposia

Choral Evensong: 6.30 pm

Monday 11th June

Auricle Ensemble: 8.00 pm

Tickets £8 / £5

Box Office: Biggar's Music, 273
Sauchiehall Street, 0141-332 8676

Friday 15th June

Pietra di Luna - Flute & Guitar Duo:

7.00 pm

Tickets: £8 / £5 at the door

"Phantom of the Opera": 10.00 pm

Tickets £5 at the door

Saturday 16th June - 7.30 pm

St Mary's Cathedral

and Scottish Opera present

Noye's Fludde by Benjamin Britten

Tickets £5 (conc £4, under 16 free)

"Phantom of the Opera": 10.00 pm

Tickets £5 at the door

Sunday 17th June

Choral Evensong: 6.30 pm

Friday 22nd June

King's Park Brass: 8.00 pm

Tickets (at the door) £4 (conc £3)

Saturday 23rd June

Gregorian Chant Day

Tickets £25.00 for the day

A study day on Gregorian Chant led by
John Rowlands-Pritchard

Sunday 24th June

Choral Evensong: 6.30 pm

Full details can be found at
www.westendfestival.co.uk or from the
cathedral office, e-mail:
office@thecathedral.org.uk or tel: 0141
339 6691.

Mothers' Union Taking a hand in Politics to work for Families

Mothers' Union has a new increasingly effective weapon in its armoury. Through work in Social Policy, MU can identify problems affecting people and work to create positive changes for families in Society.

Society is based on relationships, but Politics is an area where the well being of Society is created. Experience of the work and balanced views of MU has encouraged political bodies, at the UN, in National Governments and in the Scottish Parliament, to seek consultations from MU on a huge variety of issues, during their formulation of new laws.

Recently MU has contributed to the Pensions Bill, the ongoing Cohabitation Bill, to redressing the gender pay gap and launched a Flexible Families Campaign to fit care round children.

High in the list of priorities in the MU Social Policy is the Empowerment of Women. Activity here is expressed at the moment in three areas: Literacy in the third world, Discrimination against women, Trafficking and slavery.

Across the world, women and girls have less access to nutrition, physical and health care and education; and enjoy fewer rights, fewer opportunities and fewer benefits than men and boys. Yet when women are able to read, their farmland is more productive, there is more money, more food and children are educated too. Empowerment of women is of supreme importance.

In March 2007 MU was at the UN discussing "Discrimination and Violence against Girls".

The elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child is crucial. Such discrimination lies at the heart of greater vulnerability to violence. It reinforces gender hierarchies throughout life and even in this country. Trafficking and slavery (of both men and women) is related to this theme.

When is a child working willingly a benefit to his family and when is it slavery? Many work for their families in terrible conditions as bonded workers.

From Asia and Eastern Europe children and young women fall prey to deceptions of criminals, who traffick them to affluent countries as sex prisoners. All these cases result from the depressing reality of desperate poverty being at the root of Slavery and Trafficking. The demand for cheap services, for sex, the vulnerability of the victims and the poverty from which they come drives this worldwide criminal business.

On the 8th September at 2pm, members of MU and all denominations of Glasgow Churches will meet in George Square, Glasgow to raise awareness of Slavery and Trafficking to a wider audience.

Come join us in an afternoon "Celebrating Freedom in Christ". Please do help us to raise everyone's awareness and promote conditions in society for stable family life in a better world.

*Margaret Sherwood ,
MU Social Policy, Diocese of Glasgow
and Galloway.*

Celebration of Authorised Ministry Service

**St Mary's Cathedral
Saturday 2nd June 2007
11am**

To celebrate and affirm the ministry of all Lay Readers and those involved in authorised ministry in the Diocese including Worship Leaders, Pastoral Assistants and Eucharistic Assistants.

All Lay Readers and those in authorised ministry in the Diocese are invited to come along with those who wish to support them. This year those who assist at the Eucharist are required to have their authorisation renewed.

Refreshments will be provided after the service.

If you have any queries about the service, or about authorised ministry, please contact Revd Shelley Marsh, Diocesan Adviser for Diaconal Ministries, tel: 0141 585 5845, or e-mail: revshelleymarsh@ntlworld.com

Monthly Prayer Corner

During June please pray especially for:

All Lay Readers and those involved in authorised ministry in the Diocese including Worship Leaders, Pastoral Assistants and Eucharistic Assistants as they have their ministry affirmed, and for some licences renewed, at the cathedral on Saturday 2nd June.

All members of General Synod, as they meet in Edinburgh from 7th to 9th June.

Everyone involved with the West End Festival at St Mary's Cathedral.

!!! Congratulations !!!

To the Families United Support Group at St Augustine's, Dumbarton, who recently won the Health and Wellbeing Section of the Local Heroes Award run by the Evening Times.

The support group is a community project, encouraging former heroin addicts to lead drug-free lives.

They have received a splendid trophy and a cheque for £3000. What a great achievement!

Port Chaplain for the Scottish Ports

The Mission to Seafarers Scotland will soon base a full-time Port Chaplain in Grangemouth who will minister to seafarers visiting the Scottish ports. This is a major step forward inasmuch as the Mission has not had an exclusive pro-active ministry in Scotland since the great days of shipping on the Clyde. As a missionary society of the Anglican Church the Mission to Seafarers depends entirely on voluntary contributions and with appreciation asks congregations and individuals to please continue their generous support for this new ministry in Scotland.

Sea Sunday focuses on the lives of seafarers and the support of ministry to them. While Sea Sunday is normally the second Sunday in July (8th July) it can be celebrated anytime.

Promotional materials may be ordered from:

*The Mission to Seafarers Scotland
tel: 01236 440132 e-mail:
mts_scotland@onetel.com*

Growing Together - Reflections

Many, many thanks to all who gave so generously of their time and hospitality to the three diocesan groups who spent time in and around our diocese, listening and learning together.

What has been shared is continuing to bear fruit in peoples' thoughts and lives.

Here as a first reflection on the experience, are some thoughts from Bob Nesmith one of our friends from Kentucky.

Gill Young

Reflections on Faith & Life - Fair Trade

*By this everyone will know that you are my disciples,
if you have love for one another. John 13:35*

I subscribe to too many magazines. They pile up on our coffee table and in my office until I either throw them out or take a trip. Usually when I go somewhere that involves flying I pack as many as I can into my carryon bag in hopes of discarding them while on the trip. When I left Louisville last month for my trip to Scotland to spend a week with a group from Kentucky, Rwanda and Scotland I had a bag full. On the flight over I read a recent issue of *Sojourners* magazine that described the problems resulting from the free trade pacts that the U.S. has created.

During my trip I learned the difference between free trade and fair trade. This reflection does not give adequate space to explain why the free trade agreements that the U.S. has pushed so hard, and that I had thought were good for all, are helping large U.S. companies at the expense of small local producers in other countries. For those who are bothered by this the fair trade movement is a way to assure that those producers receive a fair price for their goods and labor.

In Louisville Fair Trade has meant bad coffee and cheap trinkets, until recently. Now at least one store sells quality merchandise and we can buy good coffee. But we still have a long way to go to catch up with the Scots who have embraced fair trade as a country. In Marks & Spencer, one of Britain's largest food chains, I saw aisles of fair trade food products. Newspaper ads highlighted fair trade fashion clothing.

One of my "to do's" on returning home is to try to encourage interest in understanding the economic issues among my friends and colleagues and create at least a small body of people who will embrace the value of buying fair trade products. I believe this is a moral issue because free trade is creating poverty while fair trade helps eliminate poverty. It is also another way of saying to the world that not all Americans are blind to the effects of our government's actions.

The passage from John was read in many of our churches last Sunday. Judged by what one sees in the media about Christians one would find it hard to accept that we believe what Jesus said. Only by our actions can we refute that. So I close with a quote from Barbara Grafton, a NY City writer who posted this in her e-mail on Friday.

Who will know we are Christians by our love? Everyone, Jesus says. The love we show won't be primarily seen in the negative, as a simple list of things from which we refrain. It will probably be a story of things we do, ways in which we step into a hurting world and actively participate in its healing. People will see it -- not just us, not just the insiders. Everyone.

PS

I have just returned from spending most of the week in Washington, DC. While there I had the opportunity to meet with our Senator Mitch McConnell, who is the Republican leader of the Senate. I shared with him my concern about our free trade policies and what I had observed in Scotland.

*Peace & blessings,
Bob Nesmith*

Growing Together with the Mothers' Union

The Mothers' Union invited the group to learn more about the Mothers' Union in the Diocese. Trish Heywood the retired Worldwide President was there to welcome old friends of Josephine Rwaji and Consaltina from Rwanda. Josephine was on the MU General Trustee board overseeing the worldwide work of the MU and Consaltina was a MU worker who has worked tirelessly to support families and children over many years.

The MU gave a presentation about their work and then Josephine spoke about life from the early days of the MU in 1960's in Rwanda to the present day. Sheila Redwood our newly appointed Scottish President was also there and she told them she was on the Scottish Executive committee concerned with promoting links with Malawi which Glasgow & Galloway Mothers' Union Diocese also has links with.

Our friends from Kentucky were interested to learn about our work and compared us a little to the women's group in the Episcopal Church USA, Order of the Daughters of the King.

A lovely lunch was provided by the Mothers' Union in Bishopbriggs, which was followed by a moving Eucharist led by Geoff Scobie.

Hilary Moran