



Archdeaconry Synod



January 31st to
February 2nd
2018

COSTA BLANCA CHAPLAINCY

REPORT TO THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

“How do we sing the Lord’s song in a strange land?”

A total of 13 from our Chaplaincy attended Synod this year. All our clergy were present, as were our 5 elected representatives. In addition, 4 “visitors” accompanied us. Fr Jim and Sue Varley both suffered the flu. They and around 5 or 6 others, including the synod secretary were not at all well.

We took a full part in all the business sessions, and in the worship. Indeed, the worship was coordinated once again by our senior chaplain, Fr Marcus. This included a daily eucharist, and morning prayer, each service with its own theme, music and tailored content.

The theme of Synod, shown above, focused our minds on the challenges of migration, and the needs of refugees, especially the thousands of children fleeing conflict, often separated from their families.



Bishop Robert led into the topic with a talk entitled “Strangers at the gates: welcoming the migrant and refugee”. He set the scene,

explained the scale of the challenge, and the causes, largely human conflict and climate change.

We had two further eye-opening and thought-provoking presentations on the subject, giving us real life examples of the need, and of just some of the work being done.

Revd. Deacon Christine Saccali, of the Anglican Church in Greece spoke about the crisis there, made more critical by the closing of borders by neighbouring countries. She showed us refugee camps, and talked of the work of our people there, to help the families, who are limited even more by the dire economic situation in Greece, from where there seems to be no current escape.

The second talk was by Paul and Gemma Carr, an inspirational young couple from our Costa del Sol churches. The Summer edition of our diocesan magazine 'The European Anglican' featured the story of Paul Carr who, supported by a group of churches on Spain's Costa del Sol, embarked on a project to work with refugees and migrants in Greece. In this talk Paul and Gemma explained their calling, and the work that they are now doing in Tanzania, where the largest refugee camp in the world hosts many thousands of refugees from conflict in Burundi, as well as the continuing work in the Eastern Mediterranean. You can read the story here -

<http://europe.anglican.org/main/latest-news/post/1133-collectively-we-can-make-a-difference>, and follow the link to the website of Collective Calling, the NGO charity set up by them.

Supporting children/young people’s ministry

Celia Paterson, of the Madrid chaplaincy talked about the challenge of bringing young people to God, through teaching and worship. Naturally, the subject of protection and safeguarding was an issue that we discussed, but the resources available, and Celia’s own enthusiasm and resources were offered to all.



Safeguarding

The interim Diocesan Secretary, Bishop Robert and the Archdeacon, Fr Geoff all spoke about aspects of this critical issue. A much-simplified approach to the strategy is being developed, with more concise documentation, and easier to find resources. The communications in the event of an incident were also explained.

Bishop Jorge of Peru



We were joined by the Anglican Bishop of Peru, who was given a warm welcome by members of the Gibraltar Archdeaconry Synod meeting in Torrevieja. Representatives of the churches in Spain, Portugal, Morocco and Gibraltar forged a link some years ago with the former Bishop of Peru, Rt Rev Bill Godfrey and have enjoyed visits and fellowship links. When Bishop Bill retired three years ago Bishop Jorge was appointed to Peru and is based in the capital Lima from there he serves his diocese covering the entire country.

REGIONES MISIONERAS
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Bishop Jorge has been sharing his experiences of a vastly different Spanish speaking Anglican diocese and is rapidly learning English, so he is well prepared for the Lambeth Conference in 2020. He says he is impressed by the

depth of ecumenical links and the way many churches in the Gibraltar Archdeaconry are able to use Roman Catholic churches and participate in shared events.

He spoke about the work of the 38 churches in his diocese and thanked us for our continued support. It was an informative and inspiring presentation, by a man of obvious passion.

Following the conclusion of Synod, Bishop Jorge spent a few days with the Torrevieja Chaplaincy, where he met with the Bishop of Orihuela-Alicante. Fr Rodney joined Fr Richard of Torrevieja for that meeting, and then brought the bishop back to our Chaplaincy for a few days. He is joining the weekly Wednesday mass in Javea this week, before moving on to Madrid, and then his flight home.



"Walking together in faith"

The Diocesan strategy was introduced by David Coulston, the Lay Chair to Synod, and an advisor to the Bishop. He explained the basis of our strategy:

- Building up the body of Christ
- Sharing in the evangelisation of Europe
- Striving for a just and sustainable world
- Working for reconciliation
- Resourcing ministry

You can read the strategy, and see the work being done in each area here -

<http://europe.anglican.org/what-we-do/diocesan-strategy>

Financing the work of the Diocese

The Interim Diocesan Secretary presented the plans to recruit three dedicated archdeacons (at present most archdeacons also run a parish), to appoint a full-time communications officer, and to complete the Safeguarding team at Church House. There was a lively debate on the cost to the chaplaincies of this, but we recognize the needs. We must now consider how able we are to meet the request for additional funding, based on the financial health of the chaplaincy this year.

Communication

The Diocesan Communications Consultant, Liz Hudson explained the current state of communications, both within the Church in Europe, and to the world beyond the Church. Liz discussed the greater use of "social media", the immediacy of modern communication, the value of printed material, and the benefit of communications training. Fr Marcus discussed his radio show on Pure Gold FM (FM stands for Fr Marcus, of course), and Liz has offered resources to help make the most of this opportunity. Fr Marcus also interviewed the Diocesan Bishop for a future show, and some of the other speakers, to allow him to share some of the inspiration, and the challenge that we have all brought home with us.

Worship



Torrevieja were licensed. The Bishop's sermon subject was "Seeking the Guidance of the Holy Spirit".

*'O let me hear thee speaking
In accents clear and still.
Above the storms of passion,
The murmurs of self-will.
O speak to reassure me,
To hasten or control,
O speak, and make me listen,
Thou guardian of my soul.'*



On Thursday evening we worshipped in a local church, and the preacher was the Right Reverend Michael Colclough. Bishop of Kensington until a few years ago. He spoke powerfully about

pilgrimage, and he reminded us that we do not come to the altar rail to "take" communion, but to "make" communion with Our Lord. "As we hold out our hands to receive the Bread of Life, we necessarily hold them out in the offering of ourselves, open and vulnerable, to Him." Bishop Michael had also addressed the clergy chapter, earlier in the week, on the subject of "Re-kindling the first love for the ordained".

Bishop Robert's Lent Appeal

With all the discussions on refugees in mind, the Bishop's Lent appeal is to fund a refuge and chaplaincy support for the children still living rough in the Calais area. You can read the appeal letter here - <http://europe.anglican.org/main/latest-news/post/1334-bishops-lent-appeal-2018>. Please be generous by giving through the special collection boxes in any of our churches between now and Easter.

What next?

Chaplaincy Council will discuss the various issues raised to help us learn from what we saw and heard, and to take this Chaplaincy forward in faith.

More information

This report features links to a few important resources. If you would like to question your representatives, or ask further questions, please do, either directly, or at the Chaplaincy Annual Meeting, at La Fustera, on Tuesday March 20th.

Your elected lay representatives to this synod are Andrew Johnson (Chaplaincy Warden) - La Fustera
Denis Johnson – Gandia
Don Stewart – Denia
Gary Lloyd (Chaplaincy Treasurer) - Albir
Margaret Rivers – Denia