

Bible Lands

Winter 2011/12

Magazine of the Jerusalem and the Middle East Church Association

www.jmecca.org.uk



Jerusalem



Egypt & North Africa



Cyprus & the Gulf



Iran



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THE JERUSALEM AND THE MIDDLE EAST CHURCH ASSOCIATION

(JMECA)

Founded in 1887

'To encourage support in prayer, money and personal service for the religious and other charitable work of the Episcopal church in Jerusalem and the Middle East'.

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The next issue will be published in June for
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Views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the Association; therefore only signed articles will be published.

JMECA Website

The new site has information for each of the four Dioceses with links to the websites of each one.
See page 3

www.jmecca.org.uk

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JMECA Launches its New Website!

Please visit us at www.jmecca.org.uk and take a look around. We've had more than a 'face-lift'. The site has been restructured to make it easier for you to find what you are looking for and we've added lots more information which we hope you find interesting and useful such as up-to-date news from around the Province, featured projects and more information about JMECA and the funds we manage.

Why we decided to change it

The Jerusalem and Middle East Church Association moved into the digital age by launching its original website in 2002 and the site served its purpose well, giving JMECA a presence on line where people could find out about the Association and the Province it supports, read *Bible Lands* on screen or download it and make on-line donations. However, life in the digital world moves quickly and the site was beginning to look very dated when I joined JMECA in May 2010. The need for re-developing the website had already been suggested by its original web-designer and administrator Peter Chapman.

The key issue with the old site was its inability to engage with the visitors who happened upon it through search engines. As an interim step Peter redesigned the layout of the site and included a "News" area. However, it was agreed by the board of directors that a more significant overhaul was necessary in order to meet the objectives.

What we set out to achieve

- 1 To present a dynamic view of the work of the Anglican Churches in the Middle East, and of the involvement of the JMECA in supporting this work
- 2 To provide easy mechanisms for visitors to request further information on our the work
- 3 To promote donations from visitors in support of the Province
- 4 To be easy to manage, edit and update by authorised members of the Trust, both for text and illustrations

It's been a journey

After a review of possible website design and development companies, three were shortlist to provide proposals and we have been extremely satisfied with our final selection



of Effusion (www.effusion.co.uk) as our partner in the development process. It's been a real challenge and huge learning curve for the directors and me but the team at Effusion have guided us through it, listened to us and always come back with solutions

Does the new website meet its objectives?

From my point of view it is certainly easy to manage and edit but that is the least important of the objectives we set out. Of more importance is whether you find it an engaging website that is easy to navigate and find what you are looking for. So please come and have a look around and drop me an email to tell me your views. A real advantage is that the site can evolve further over the coming years so your feedback can be instrumental in how we take it forward.

Shirley Eason, Administrator

Your Feedback would be really appreciated

Email me at secretary@jmecca.eclipse.co.uk or via the website

Aesthetics: Does it look nice?
Does the style suit JMECA?

Functionality: Can you find what you are looking for easily?

Content: Does it contain the right information? What don't we need and what have we missed?

Engagement: Did you want to find out more? Look at other pages? Will you visit it again? How often?

Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf

NEW APPOINTMENTS

Catherine Dawkins Ordained Priest in Bahrain

The Diocese of Cyprus & the Gulf was granted permission in February this year by a vote of a Provincial Synod to allow the ordination and appointment of women priests. The decision does not affect the other three dioceses in the province: Egypt with North Africa and the Horn of Africa, Iran, and Jerusalem.

The Revd, Catherine Dawkins, previously a deacon, became the first woman in the Province of the Middle East to be ordained priest. The service was held in St. Christopher's Cathedral Bahrain and attended by about 100 people, including 14 clerics from ten different countries, members of the congregation from Bahrain, as well as visitors from other churches in the region. She will serve within the Anglican chaplaincy in Dubai, Sharjah and the Northern Emirates. Her husband, Nigel, already a priest, is to be the senior Port Chaplain with the Mission to Seafarers in Dubai.

The new priest said "The ordination of women to the priesthood is an exciting development in the life of this diocese, and I am looking forward to embarking on this new phase of my ministry. I know there are other women exploring their vocation and I am pleased that this avenue is now open to them, too"



The Rev. Catherine Dawkins, Bishop Michael Lewis, and the Rev. Nigel Dawkins at the June 5 ordination.

Revd. Simon Holloway

The Bishop has appointed the Revd Simon Holloway, previously Vicar in the Horley Team Ministry in the Diocese of Southwark and Province of Canterbury, to be Chaplain of South East Cyprus. He had been



in his previous post since 2002 and before that he served in the Dioceses of Lichfield and Birmingham. His new ministry in the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf began in October.

New Canons

The Bishop in Cyprus and the Gulf has named a new lay canon and a new clerical canon of St Christopher's Cathedral, Bahrain. They are:

Mr. John Banfield

Mr John Banfield is a co-opted member of Diocesan Synod's Standing and Finance Committee, which is also the Bishop's Council. For some time now he has had special responsibilities in the oversight and planning of the diocese's finances. He also supervises the coordination of its representation in the United Kingdom. Through his life in business John has had a long residential and travelling association with the region and the diocese, both Cyprus and the Gulf. He has been particularly instrumental in maintaining and developing the diocese's major mission and service project of Christ Church and its clinics in Aden, where he is a member of the Council of Reference.

Revd. Andrew Thompson

The Revd Andrew Thompson MBE is Chaplain of St Andrew Abu Dhabi and Diocesan Director of Ordinands, as well as Vocations Training and Ordination Officer for the Gulf Archdeaconry specifically. Until his appointment to Abu Dhabi he served as Chaplain of St Paul's Kuwait, and both before and since ordination has lived and worked in a variety of Middle Eastern locations including the United Arab Emirates.

From Aden

The Revd Peter Crooks and his wife Nancy, who served in the Middle East Province for many years, have returned to Aden on a short term basis. The following are extracts from a letter written in September:

“Some of you know that we offered to the Bishop in Cyprus to do a short stint of ‘caretaking’ for the clinics in Aden as the previous director and wife left in February and were snapped up for jobs in Dubai. The Bishop responded very quickly. The following is a little update since we arrived:

Our main concern since our arrival has been to do something about the long list of patients waiting for cataract operations. We have located the Czech surgeon, Dr. Jan, and he is free and willing to come for a month which will greatly help. We have also been able to take back on a part-time basis a much loved and respected Yemani doctor who worked in the clinic four years ago. She is back in Aden with her family taking refuge from the unrest in Sanaa.

Tomorrow, Saturday, is the start of the working week. Saturday and Wednesdays are currently days of civil disobedience in protest at the continued rule of the country’s much despised president. The days achieve little, schools and government offices close and bored frustration makes further scope for mischief. Thankfully Aden remains relatively peaceful – the occasional explosion and rattle of small arms, sometimes merely to celebrate a wedding – but nothing like the savagery in the capital, Sanaa, some 200 miles north of us. Overall the situation is ‘fragile’ but life goes on.

Tomorrow the clinics will be busy and I will be driven by Sahel, a Somali employee and good friend, to visit the Mother Teresa Sisters of Charity, then to a medical instrument repairer and also to a shipping agent to try to start hassling for the payment of wages of a ship’s crew. By 1pm the official working day is over and we subside! Lunch is bread, feta cheese, tomatoes and yogurt. Sometimes we get a take away – chunks of chicken or fresh grilled tuna in a sweaty bag, with salad and rice and a bottle of fresh lime drink. It’s yummy.

We sometimes walk to the scruffy, friendly shops twenty minutes away, stepping over putrid puddles of sewage and avoiding scrapping cats!

Hope this gives a tiny picture of what we’re up to. It’s not a lot but it seems good to be here.”

Peter and Nancy

From Doha

Archdeacon Bill Schwartz sends promising news:

“You may be very happy to know that we recently received confirmation that a local bank has offered a loan capacity which will enable us to finish the Church of the Epiphany building and then make payments from the rent of worship space, similar to the arrangements used in the Emirates. The terms are favourable and timely. We have every reason to expect the building will be ready for use by Christmas 2012, and we are



planning a consecration service on Epiphany 2013. The congregation goes from strength to strength. We have 75 young people under twelve in our Friday School. The main sanctuary will hold 650 and it won’t look empty when we move in next year. The two Sunday and one Monday congregations remain small but faithful. The Tamil-language church plant is going well and has almost doubled in size since March.”

From Bahrain

The Dean of St. Christopher’s Cathedral, Christopher Butt, writes:

“We were away in the summer and wondered what we might find on our return. Several families and individuals have left, but new people have come. We give thanks for a good Harvest Festival with almost £2,000 given to the clinics in Aden. Reader training is going well, four formally training but twelve attended the session. A terrific new Seafarers Centre has opened in the new port.”

The Independent Commission of Inquiry Report into the attempted Bahrain revolution is awaited.

From Dubai, Sharjah & The Northern Emirates

The Chaplain in Jebel Ali, Canon Steven Wright, writes:

“The Bishop has installed and licensed the Revd. Dr. Ruwan Palapathwala, the new Chaplain. The Bishop was to have opened the new St. Luke’s Church in Ras Al Khamiah, but unfortunately it has taken longer to complete than expected. We hope he will come when it is completed in the new year”

The Revd. Ernest Victor, Chaplain in Sharjah, has announced he will be retiring next summer.

Ordination in Iraq



Baghdad Celebrations

Sunday September 11th was a great day for the congregation of St George's Anglican Church Baghdad. The bishop, the Rt Revd Michael Lewis, was present to ordain the Revd Faiz Jerjes who became the first Iraqi Anglican priest at the church. Together with his wife Nawal, Faiz has been largely responsible for the day to day work of the chaplaincy during the last year, as a deacon. Prior to that, he was a Lector at the church. He was welcomed by a congregation of several hundred which included the British ambassador and other civic figures alongside Christian and Muslim religious leaders.

The Chaplaincy serves the area in which it is set, one of the most badly damaged during the war. Security is still a huge issue and during the last couple of years there have been outrages which have claimed many lives. In the face of this the church runs a clinic with four doctors and three dentists, treating around 200 patients a day. It organizes a food relief programme through its Mothers Union that provides 500 food parcels weekly to the poor of the district. It is soon to open a church primary school for 150 pupils. It has an extensive youth programme, and works for peace and justice at a number of levels.

The Chaplain, Canon Andrew White, said "This is a wonderful day for us. We have been so blessed."



American Award for Canon Andrew White

The International First Freedom Award for Canon Andrew White was announced by its President, Ambassador Randolph Bell, who said the award existed to advance freedom of religion and conscience. Canon White has been close to the American initiative in Iraq and has been outspoken in his support of the invasion of Iraq, a stance which has made him a controversial figure in the region and beyond. Canon White remains Chaplain to the St. George's Anglican Church in Baghdad where he has worked alongside the depleted Iraqi Christian population.

The award will be presented in Virginia in January 2012.

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.

Bishop Suheil Receives Residency Permit



For twelve months Bishop Suheil was refused residency in Jerusalem. Following international representations to the Israeli government, the Bishop writes:

Dear Friends

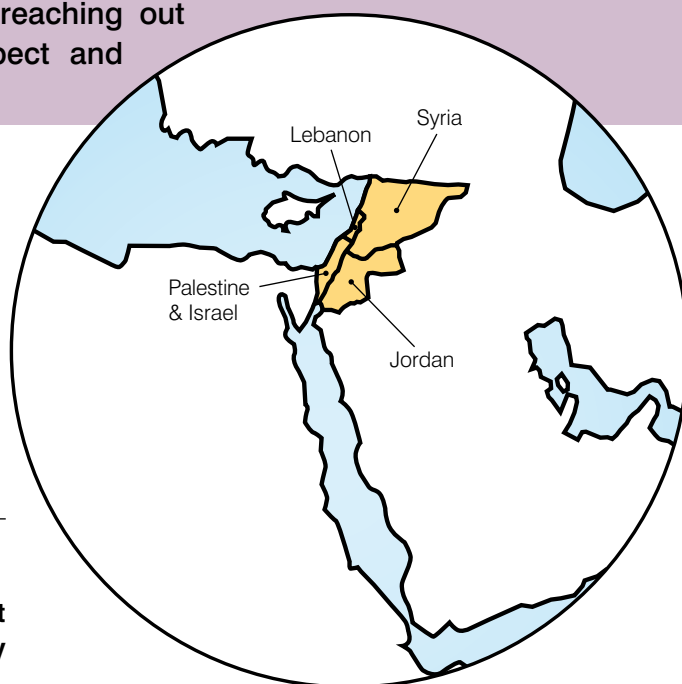
It is with great pleasure, and with God's help, that I and my family have received our 'Residency Permits'.

I want to thank all of you, my friends and colleagues throughout the Anglican Episcopal Communion and the worldwide Christian community, for your continued support throughout this time. It has been deeply appreciated and most encouraging knowing that we have been kept in your thoughts and prayers as we awaited this most heartening outcome.

I have been overwhelmed by the support given to me from His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Reverend Dr. Rowan Williams, and all the Primates, Archbishops and Bishops of the Anglican Communion; and the Greek and Latin Patriarchs of Jerusalem; also our Partners throughout the world including the U.S.A., Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, and the United Kingdom; and the worldwide community including Washington, D.C.; the State Department of the United States and the American Consul-General in Jerusalem, and the office of the British Foreign Secretary.

Please forgive me for not listing everyone here. Please know that in my heart I give you all great thanks and you are not forgotten.

Salaam, +Suheil



Farewell

Bishop Suheil hosted a farewell reception for the Rev. Canon Robert and Deborah Edmunds when they returned to USA after three years of service on the Bishop's staff. Among the guests were the British Consul General, Sir Vincent and Lady Fean, and the American Consul General Representative Matthew Welch. Church leaders attending were led by His Beatitude Theophilos III, Greek Patriarch and Bishop of Jerusalem who presented Canon Edmunds with a gift of a traditional Orthodox cross and expressed his warm gratitude for Canon Edmunds' service as Secretary to the Heads of Churches. Bishop William Shomali, represented the Latin Patriarch and Archbishop Aris Shirvanian represented the Armenian Patriarch. Bishop Suheil expressed his deep appreciation for Canon Edmunds' service as his Chaplain and Canon Pastor to the English speaking congregation and to Deborah for her work as his Executive Secretary and her support of the diocesan women's ministries. He said "Bob and Debbie show not only love and concern toward the people of this Diocese and others in this region, but they were truly honest and faithfully servants. They were sensitive to the difficult circumstances we face as Christians in this land and they will continue to support us from their home in the future"

Renewal of Diocesan Institutions

The pride and joy of the Diocese is its institutions which are servants of the whole community. Bishop Suheil has made their renewal a keynote of his episcopate. There is much progress to celebrate:

Revitalization of St. Luke's Hospital, Nablus

Four years ago St Luke's Hospital was in a poor state financially and staff morale was low. The Bishop has paid an all day visit to mark the third anniversary of the re-structuring that has restored the hospital to financial good health and top medical efficiency. The Bishop commended the good work of the new hospital leadership and all hospital staff. He said the hospital now stands as a beacon of hope in the city of Nablus. He prayed with patients and visited with the interfaith staff, remarking on the positive changes that have taken place over the recent years. He saw for himself the renovations and upgrading of equipment. A new computerized Radiology unit is now functioning. The Urology department provides a unique service on the West Bank and made 380 diagnoses last year. The new cystoscope now installed will help manage those urological diseases. There is a new neonatal machine to support babies with respiratory failure. New infusion pumps have also been added to the medical and surgical departments. Staff morale is now high, as the developments have made St. Luke's into a quality institution.

The Bishop said, "St. Luke's Hospital now demonstrates the community benefit of interfaith professionals focusing on common beliefs and mission to serve people in need with dignity and equality."



Foundation Stone Laid for New School in Jordan

On a trip for Confirmation Sunday at the Church of the Redeemer in Amman, Bishop Dawani laid the foundation stone for a new school in Husn. With education for special needs children in great demand and with the blessing of the Jordanian government, the Diocese of Jerusalem is expanding its educational outreach to Husn where special education is much needed. Husn is in the north, near Irbid where the diocesan Arab Evangelical School includes students with impaired vision in every classroom. The new school will follow the same tradition of inclusivity for partially sighted children. The school will begin with a kindergarten but the plan allows for school expansion, one grade at a time, to assure continued education for the students.

Greetings

The Bishop has welcomed Deborah Neal from the diocese of Los Angeles to succeed Deborah Edmunds as his Executive Secretary. She began in September and says "I am very excited to be here and able to work alongside the diocesan team".

St. Andrew's Diabetic Clinic, Ramallah

St. Andrew's Diabetic Centre will be an essential focus of the healthcare ministries of the Diocese of Jerusalem. The construction of the centre is now complete and it is hoped that the needed equipment along with elevators will be installed within the next couple of months.

The main focus of the Diabetic Centre is treating the complicated consequences of diabetes among Palestinians. The outpatient clinic will provide comprehensive services. The Centre will focus on diagnosis, on monitoring diet, on blood pressure and heart vessels, in addition to the necessary diabetes tests. The Centre will be open to all and especially to those who cannot afford treatment elsewhere. A sliding fee scale will be used in order to allow anyone in need to access quality primary healthcare. The idea of a Diabetic Centre in the West Bank emerged from a great need for many Palestinians especially among refugees, as diabetes is growing rapidly in Palestine. According to the Palestinian Ministry of Health, the number of new registered diabetic patients now exceeds two and a half thousand a year. The Centre is planning to raise awareness among Palestinian communities of healthy eating habits and preventive measures against diabetes.

St. John's School, Haifa

Bishop Suheil Dawani, the President of St. John's School, accompanied by the School Board and the parents committee, attended the opening day of the new academic year. The Rev. Canon Hatem Shehadeh, parish priest, led the prayers for the new year and the students. He said "hopes blow like a variable wind through our communities as much as any other, but this place is filled with new energy". The Bishop and officers sensed a joyful atmosphere

as the new students arrived from the various Arabic towns and villages surrounding Haifa. Mr. Aziz Daeem the Principal, welcomed the new first graders and expressed his wishes and hopes for a very productive year.

St George's School Jerusalem and International Baccalaureate

With the approval of the Israeli Board of Education, St. George's School Jerusalem is planning to study for the International Baccalaureate (IB) in the future. This will call for a major change in curriculum, staffing and facilities. Bishop Suheil, with the School Board, Mr. Eid Sader the Principal and his assistants invited Mrs. Haifa Najjar, the General Director of Al-Ahliyyah Girls and the Bishop's Boys School (which use IB) to meet with them and discuss the issues.

Mrs. Najjar explained the IB system's international vision, goals, and its implementation. She said the IB system allowed for increased cooperation among the teachers and for more integration. It introduced a new learning environment for students by utilizing technology as a main component in the educational process. It encouraged new techniques and stimulated creative and critical thinking. It also encouraged scientific research and leadership skills.

St George's has an outstanding history of academic success and its alumni include many leading Palestinians who, in turn, are sending the next generation to the school. The Bishop is keen that the school retains its progressive reputation and that academic excellence is maintained.

Graduation Day at St George's.



Crucial Questions Facing Middle

by Colin Chapman

1. What can stop the numerical decline of Christianity in the Middle East? If emigration is possible and comparatively easy, what is there to encourage Christians to stay rooted in the region?

If you can't find employment, educate your children and pay for medicine, if you are fearful of your present government being replaced by an Islamist government of some kind, and if you have a 'green card' because you have relatives who have emigrated and settled and feel secure in the US, why don't you go and join them? A Palestinian Christian friend, who is a lecturer at Bethlehem Bible College, suggests that the best way to encourage them to stay is to give them a sense of mission and help them to see what they can contribute to the life of the countries of the region.

2. What kind of constitution will enable Christians to feel secure?

What will the new constitutions of Tunisia, Libya and Egypt say about the role of Islam in the constitution and laws of the country? Will it be 'the sole source of legislation' or 'a source ...'? Some Egyptian Islamists have been saying publicly for some years that if and when they get into power, they want to reinstate the *dhimma* system and make Christian Copts pay the *jizya* tax. Other Muslims have said that the *dhimma* system should be consigned to the cupboard of history and insist that Christians and Muslims must be equal as fellow-citizens. The Islamist Nahda Party in Tunisia, for example, which has won the largest share of votes in the recent election (but not a majority) say that they want to see a genuinely pluralist state in which there is no distinction on the basis of religion. The confessional system in Lebanon has until now

guaranteed the security of the Christian community. But with the decrease in the proportion of Christians to around 35% of the population and the increasing power of Hizbullah, can the security of the Christian community be secured by the constitution?

3. Can Christians ever be involved politically?

It is encouraging to find that some Christians in Egypt have felt that they now have new opportunities to be involved. The Egyptian director of the Alexandria School of Theology in a recent email wrote, 'Christians are now much more active evangelistically, socially and politically.' An ordained American Presbyterian lecturer at the Coptic Evangelical Seminary in Cairo preached at an evangelical church in Cairo early in February during the Revolution on Jeremiah's letter to the exiles in chapter 29. Following an incredibly enthusiastic response from the congregation after the service she wrote: 'I was amazed that the church here, whose pietistic (and fearful) isolationism has driven me crazy in the past, is now starting to engage in integrated reflection about public life and civic responsibility ... Christian hope means a vision for society, for God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven.'

4. How should Christians relate to Islamists and moderate Muslims?

It's comparatively easy to have dialogue with moderate Muslims and many Christians feel they want to strengthen the hands of the moderates in their struggles with the extremists. If it seems impossible to have dialogue with Islamists who want to establish an Islamic state or are committed to violent *jihad*, we need to be challenged by the example of people like Brother Andrew who shocked many of his supporters in 1998 when he visited the Hamas leaders who had been expelled by Israel and were camping out in tents



Catholics in Bethlehem.



Ethiopian Orthodox in Jerusalem.

Eastern Christians Today

during the winter on the mountains in southern Lebanon, and has on several occasions visited Hamas leaders in Gaza. Similarly Sami Awad of the Holy Land Trust in Bethlehem has worked with some Hamas leaders, exploring with them the principles of non-violent resistance.

5. What's the future for Israel/Palestine?

I continue to believe that this conflict lies at the heart or very near the heart of many of the problems of the Middle East. Everything in the region is inter-connected, and I dare to believe that a peaceful and just solution to this conflict would go a long way towards reducing the anger of many Arabs and many Muslims towards the West. When Barak Obama became president, I felt a certain optimism based on his declared statements of intent about addressing the issues. At present, however, I have little confidence that he or the US is able or willing to play the role of peace-makers. If and when the recent Palestinian request to the UN for recognition as a state is put to the vote at the Security Council, will the US be forced to use its veto and will Britain abstain? Many fear that even if a Palestinian state were to be recognised, it wouldn't really change the situation on the ground – especially with Israel's continuing occupation of the West Bank. It's hard to be very optimistic at the present time.

6. Can Protestant Christianity ever be deeply rooted in the Middle East?

Philip Jenkins' magisterial book *The Lost History of Christianity: the thousand-year golden age of the church in the Middle East, Asia and Africa*, suggests that one of the reasons why Christianity virtually disappeared from North Africa following the Islamic conquests in the 7th Century was that it had not become deeply rooted in the whole country and its membership and leadership were largely foreign. Some (but not all) Protestant churches in the Middle East today look like carbon copies of the western churches which planted them and exist almost on a financial life-support machine. The Eastern churches look thoroughly contextualized – although some would argue that the contextualization process got stuck in the 5th century. Is it conceivable that some Protestant churches could wither away in the same way that the churches did in North Africa in the 7th and 8th centuries?

7. What are the most effective forms of Christian witness – schools, hospitals, development, advocacy, dialogue, media, or Bible distribution?

A former Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem used to describe the institutions of the diocese – including schools and hospitals – as 'the arms and legs of the church.' In Egypt

the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS) has developed a wide range of development projects over many decades which are all serving the whole community of both Muslims and Christians. In recent years Christians have discovered a new boldness through imaginative and creative use of media – including radio, literature distribution and satellite television and the internet. Having experienced the fearfulness of Christians in Egypt during the days of Gamal Abdul Nasser in the 1960s, it has been most encouraging to see how many have grown in their self-confidence and their desire – in spite of all their fears – to bear witness to their faith through life, deed and word.

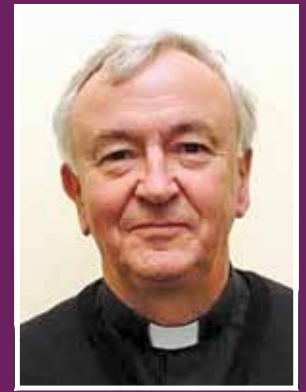
Colin and Anne Chapman worked with CMS in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Cyprus for seventeen years in three different spells, and have spent the last academic year at the Near East School of Theology, where Colin was teaching Islamic Studies. This article is adapted from a presentation at the Oxford Centre of Mission Studies in July and the Henry Martyn Centre in Cambridge in October on 'Christians in the Middle East – past, present and future'. A recording of the presentation and the full text can be accessed on the website of the Henry Martyn Centre, Cambridge.



Orthodox in Jerusalem.



The Fate of Christians in the Holy Land



Archbishop Nichols.

Ninety church leaders met with Moslem and Jewish

spokesmen for a two day conference at Lambeth Palace, hosted by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Catholic Archbishop of Westminster. The Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem, Suheil Dawani, and the Catholic Patriarch, Fouad Twal, were among many guests, clergy and laity, from the Holy Land. The purpose, according to Dr. Williams, was to raise “literate, compassionate awareness” of the Christian plight and to galvanise action.

The diminishing numbers of Christians in the birthplace of their faith is a cause of great concern. Whereas Christians represented 30 percent of the population at the time of the British Mandate in 1948, today their share of the population is estimated at 1.25 percent. The risk, as the Catholic Patriarch of Jerusalem, Fouad Twal, has put it, is that the Holy Land is becoming a ‘spiritual Disneyland’ – full of glittering rides and attractions, but empty of its indigenous Christian population.

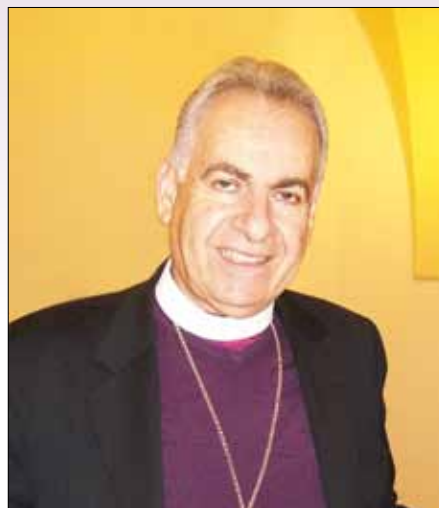
French Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran, president of the Vatican’s Pontifical Commission for Interreligious Dialogue, offered another evocative image: The Christian centres of the Holy Land as “archeological and historical sites, to be visited like the Colosseum in Rome, museums with entrance tickets, and guides who explain the beautiful legends.”

This decline in the Holy Land is part of a broad Christian exodus all across the Middle East. The reasons were summarised as fourfold:

- The Israeli/Palestinian conflict, which affects Arab Christians just as much as Arab Muslims;

- Economic instability and lack of opportunity;
- Rising Islamic fundamentalism, now compounded by fear that the promise of the Arab Spring could become a winter of insecurity and theocratic regimes;
- The fact that Christians in the area are disproportionately better educated and more affluent, and thus stand a better chance of leaving. One said “In the Middle East frustrated Christians emigrate physically, while frustrated Muslims emigrate ideologically.”

The Conference considered why Christians in the West should care about the Christian presence in the Holy Land. There were two main points:



Bishop Suheil Dawani.

First, their survival is critical to Christianity’s identity

Archbishop Rowan spoke to the first point. “Christianity is an historical religion,” he said. “At its centre is a set of events that occurred in a particular place and at a particular time. It is not open to Christians to say that Christianity is whatever they choose it to be. We are responsible to what happened in the Holy Land

two millennia ago.” A Christian witness in the place where these events occurred, the archbishop said, was “No small thing, to say that the Christian presence in the land of Our Lord does not matter would be cutting ourselves loose from history.” The archbishop spoke of the significance of the Arab Christian witness “They remind us that in its origins, Christianity is an exotic Eastern religion, not bound up with Western culture.” He reminded the Conference that “Christianity was not born in Europe, or even on the shores of North America -which is quite good for us all. It is, therefore, as alien to the capitalist West as it is to the Far East.”

Second, Christians can be a key to peace in the region, and therefore to peace in the world

Several speakers from the Holy Land insisted the presence of Christianity kept alive the notion of a pluralistic space in which tolerance, democracy, and respect for human rights are essential – and, conversely, the disappearance of Christianity would send the wrong signal about the future direction of the region. In that sense, the presence or absence of a flourishing Christian minority is essential for the political and cultural health of the society. Speakers repeatedly stressed that although Christianity has a small sociological footprint, it is a minority that matters. Churches continue to operate “a vast network of schools and universities, hospitals, and social service centres, and individual Christians make key contributions to business, politics, and arts and culture.”

Perhaps the most compelling form of that argument came from Lubna Alzaroo, a young Palestinian Muslim who attended Bethlehem University, an institution sponsored by the Catholic church. Raised in Hebron, Alzaroo said her family can trace its roots in the area back 1,500 years. In the mid-1960s, Alzaroo said, Hebron had a small Christian community, but today it has entirely disappeared. (There’s a Christian elementary school, she said, but its student population is entirely Muslim.) As a result, she didn’t actually meet a Christian until she was 18 years old, and that encounter came during a study programme in the United States. It’s not a coincidence, Alzaroo said, that Hebron has become the most religiously conservative city in the Palestinian Territories, and thus an incubator for more radical and militant currents. “Part of the reason is the lack of pluralism,” she said. “The more isolated they become, the more they think their way is the only way.” Given the link between the presence of Christianity and the plausibility of a democratic and tolerant Palestine, Alzaroo offered this dramatic warning: “If Christianity were to disappear, it would have ramifications as catastrophic for the Palestinians as the *Nakba* in 1948,” she said.

Political issues

Samer Makhoul, a Latin Catholic and executive director of “*One Voice*” a Palestine grassroots movement that brings together young Palestinians and Israelis to promote peace, said that of the four problems facing Christians in the Holy Land, the first three are “occupation, occupation, occupation.” Makhoul described Israeli military and security policy as “the father of all the problems in the region.” Over and over, Palestinian Christians insisted that the main factors fueling their exodus – political discrimination and a sense of second-class citizenship, lack of economic development and employment, restrictions on their freedom

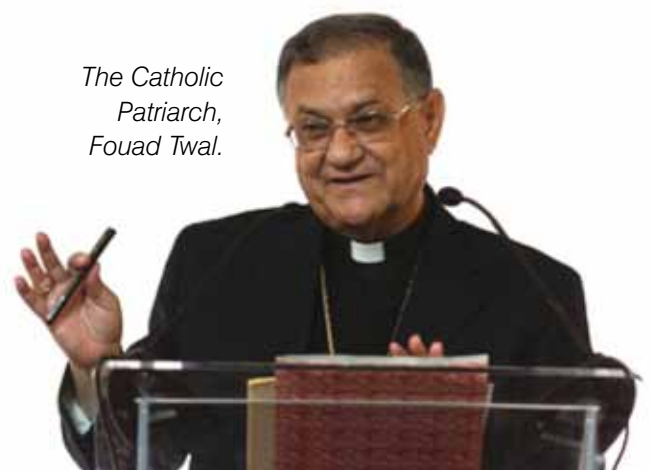
of movement, and so on – are fundamentally the result of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, rather than explicit discrimination against Christians. One frequently cited difficulty involves access to Christian holy sites. Palestinians living in the West Bank and in East Jerusalem hold different residency cards, and they cannot move from one place to the other without special permits. It can be virtually impossible for a Christian in Bethlehem, for instance, to travel to Jerusalem to worship in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. As one put it, “It’s easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a Palestinian to go to Jerusalem.”

Residency policies also had a devastating impact on families. It was said that there are more than 200 Christian families living apart today, split between members in the West Bank and members in Jerusalem.

There was also an undercurrent of frustration about negotiations which have lingered since 1993 over the “Fundamental Agreement” made between Israel and the Vatican, which was meant to regulate the tax and legal status of church properties. The agreement had not been implemented by the Israeli Knesset, and instead Israel had declared important Christian sites, such as Mount Tabor and Capernaum, to be national parks, overriding Christian control. Those acts, it was said, were part of the Israeli policy of creating “facts on the ground” that unilaterally reshape negotiations.

Hana Bendcowsky, a Jewish Israeli affiliated with the Jerusalem Centre for Christian Jewish Relations, warned of hardening Israeli attitudes towards Christianity. A 2009 survey, she said, found that 18-29 year old Israelis hold more negative views of Christians than older generations. At root, she said, Jews in Israel have a hard time thinking of themselves as a majority. They tend to see the Christians in their midst not as an embattled minority, but a “doubly threatening majority” – part of both the Arab world and the Christian west.

In the concluding plenary session Catholic Patriarch, His Beatitude Fouad Twal, reminded the conference that discussions with Israelis need never be partisan, because **“The only authentic pro-Israeli stance is also pro-Palestinian and therefore pro-peace”**.



The Catholic Patriarch, Fouad Twal.

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

The Episcopal / Anglican Diocese of Egypt with North Africa and the Horn of Africa is a diocese within the Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East in the worldwide Anglican Communion. It extends over eight countries and includes Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia and Djibouti. There are over 80 congregations throughout the diocese, with All Saints Cathedral, Cairo being the spiritual centre. The Diocese supports over 30 institutions which include hospitals, clinics, nurseries, schools, a theological seminary, micro-enterprise ventures, vocational training programmes, as well as institutions for the deaf, the disabled and the elderly.

The four goals of the diocese are to serve holistically; to train leaders; to build bridges through interfaith and ecumenical dialogue; to reach the unreached with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

New Partners for Diocese

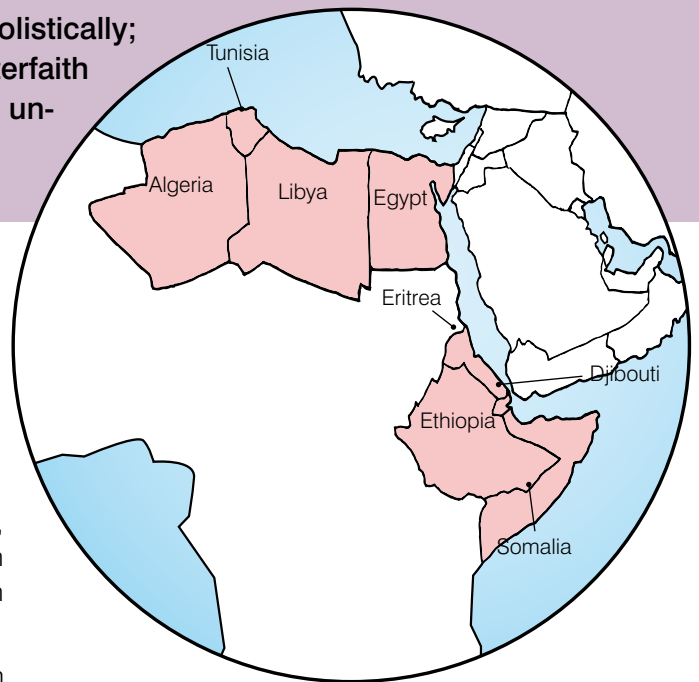
Denmark and Danmission are partners for the Diocese of Egypt

Danmission is a Danish Missionary Society, established in 2000 as a merger between the Danish Missionary Society (founded in 1821) and the Danish Santal Mission (founded in 1867).

Danmission is an independent organisation with close links to the Evangelical Lutheran Church, known as Folkekirken. Danmission has worked in the Middle East and the Arab world for over 100 years. The organisation has around 30 staff employed overseas, including 20 long-term expatriate staff and 10 volunteers. There are a further 45 staff positions in Danmission in Denmark.

The Diocese of Egypt and Danmission have for many years had a close and trusting partnership. Danmission has supported development work of EpiscoCare, in dialogue projects and in initiatives that can strengthen the church's capacity.

Danmission has sent several missionaries to work in Egypt. In 2010 the Danish couple Hanne and Jonas Norgaard Mortensen moved to Egypt with their two daughters to represent Danmission. Hanne is working fulltime for EpiscoCare, while Jonas is regional director with responsibility for leading and developing all Danmission activities in the Middle East. At the moment Danish girl Laerke Faerch Ussing is enjoying an internship with EpiscoCare. She will be assisting with reporting and communications. She is currently a student of theology, and her time as a volunteer at



the Diocese is a part of her Master's degree. She is supported by Danmission.

Visit our renovated Guest House

The doors of the Diocesan Guest House are open to host all Christians who are coming to Egypt to work, to volunteer, or to do some sightseeing. It is located across the road from All Saint's Cathedral, on the island of Zamalek in Cairo, and it is managed by Ms. Helbees Zaher.

The Guest House is a ministry of the Diocese of Egypt. As well as hosting visitors, it also hosts many events in the diocese. Recently the guest house acquired a new look, after painting and renovations were completed.

For more information about the Guest House, please see the website or contact Helbees at gsthouse@gmail.com

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

Episcocare

EpiscoCare is the Development arm of the diocese. It undertakes a great variety of projects to serve local communities. The local Centres have provided courses for nursery teachers, art and craft exhibitions to encourage local talent, beach trips for young children in the holidays, a centre for adults with special needs, a nursery in Giza where there was no provision, and a series of seminars for discussion of the new political situation and the meaning of democracy. Among the most popular is the financial loan scheme which encourages self-help and enables small businesses to develop. The following testimonies affirm the Centres and their work:

"My name is Farag, I live in Medinet El Salam. I am married and have 5 children, my oldest is 30 years and the youngest is 15. They are a big load on my back. I was working day to day but my pay was not enough to meet their needs. I heard about the Medinet El Salam Community Development Centre from my wife's sister. I went there, met them and I asked them to give me a loan to start small project for selling sewage tools and equipment. They visited my home and they decided to help me since they saw how much I am in need. After a few months I have repaid my loan and have asked for another one to expand my work. My dream is to have a big store to invite my children to work with me. I am grateful to the Medinet El Salam Centre."

"My name is Zenab Saied and I live in Ain Shams, very close to the Community Development Centre. I was making liquid soap and sold it to increase my income and help my husband. But I could only make a small profit. One day my friend said 'why don't you get loan and get ready made clothes and sell it for us?' I found that it was good idea, I talked to the staff at the Centre and I asked for a loan. They encouraged me and gave

me the loan and told me I should keep making the soap as well as the new work. I got 500 LE in the first loan then 1000LE, then 1500LE. The project made a difference in my life and I am so happy because I can help my children and my husband. I now have a role in my family life. Thanks for God and everyone who helped me."

A New Community Development Centre in Suez

For over 100 years, the Diocese of Egypt has been working in Suez through the Church of our Saviour. After Rev. Ehab Ayoub was ordained just a few months ago, God has already blessed his ministry there with the creation of a new community development centre. A member of the church donated the flats, and other members will be volunteers in the centre. The Arab il-Maamal suburb is a very poor area of Suez, with a population of around 50,000. The standard of housing is very poor. People lack awareness about health, and many people are illiterate, there is a high level of unemployment, and the average household income is very low. There are very few social services in the area. The Diocese has community development centres in poor areas of Cairo and Alexandria, which are run by EpiscoCare, the development arm of the Diocese. The vision is to reach out to the poorest communities in Egypt to enable them to improve their standard of healthy living through education and development support.

EpiscoCare will run health education classes, family planning clinics, pregnancy classes, literacy and after-school and summer classes for secondary school students, a kindergarten, classes to assist children with educational difficulties, and public meetings to raise awareness of political rights.

Bishop Mouneer visits China

The Primates of the 'Global South' have visited China at the invitation of the Ministry for Religious Affairs in China. Bishop Mouneer reports that he was hugely impressed by the growth of Christianity in a country that was previously closed to religious thought. He was amazed to see Bibles being printed, even in his own Arabic language, and he heard that Bibles are being printed 24 hours a day at the rate of one every two seconds. Huge church buildings and large seminaries for theological students are being opened. Bishop Mouneer came away with the very strong conviction that China is now leading the world in many ways. "The impact of China on Africa is remarkable! The United States invests \$17 billion in Africa each year but China invests \$127 billion each year". Bishop Mouneer concluded that if God can transform China, the largest Communist country in the world, he can change the whole Middle East "so that its citizens can enjoy democracy, freedom and, more importantly, the love of God"

Anglicans in Libya

Anglicans in Libya

The Christian faith was in Libya from the earliest days. There were Libyans at the first Pentecost, Simon from Cyrene helped carry the cross of Jesus and local tradition claims Mark the gospel writer was a Libyan. However, today there are no indigenous Libyan Christians but a vast number of 'ex-pat' Christians.

From Asia there are Indians, Koreans and Filipinos; from Africa there are Egyptians, Nigerians and Sub-Saharan; from Europe there are French, Poles and Russians. It sounds like a new Pentecostal roll call!

The Gaddafi regime allowed a limited number of churches to meet this need, and among them is the Anglican church of Christ the King, close to the centre of Tripoli. Before the revolution got into swing in February there were services each Friday in English, Arabic, Tamil, Urdu and Hindi and the Nigerians had a worship group as well. At that time there were three priests: Rev. Kosty Ketoy from Canada, Rev. Vasihar Eben Baskaran from India who was officially the priest-in-charge, and Rev. Hamdy Sedky from Egypt. As the revolution gathered momentum, foreign nationals were advised to leave the country, the priests from Canada and India among them. The numbers fell from full and overflowing



Rev. Hamdy Sedky.

services to a couple of dozen with the one remaining priest, Father Hamdy, who was determined to stay as long as there was a congregation to serve. 'We are standing in prayer and solidarity with those who are left' he has said several times. He has avoided politicising the church by refusing to fly the flag of the revolution but he has used the imagery of the fallen regimes in Tunisia and Egypt as examples of the gospel truth that the weak can overcome the strong. That was courageous preaching while Gaddafi was still in power and his agents were infiltrating every public place.

The future for the churches is unclear. The Anglican church of Christ the King had been the Roman Catholic church until Gaddafi expelled the Italian community and closed it in 1969. For several years it lay dormant, all crosses and religious symbols removed or obscured. On the initiative of the Roman Catholic bishop it was handed over to the Anglicans and dedicated in 2007. The Anglicans had lost their church, which had been a garrison church, when Gaddafi closed it in 1970. It is now demolished. The past is chequered and confusing, the unknown future may be equally so.

Meantime, all credit to Father Hamdy for staying at his post in the most testing times.

Adapted from an article by Paul Grant published in the Church Times 7 October 2011.

Medical Outreach in Menoufiya

Over the past six months, a team from Harpur Memorial Hospital in Menouf has done seven medical outreaches in villages in the province of Menoufiya in the Nile Delta. Through these outreaches, more than 700 people have had their eyes tested and screened for cataracts. In 2010, the diocese of Singapore donated a mobile medical bus which is used for medical outreaches into remote areas. For the eye work, staff from the hospital co-ordinate with churches, mosques and local leaders in the villages in order to advertise the outreach, and to create a base to work from. After the consultation, people are referred to the hospital in Menouf for either new eye glasses or for cataract surgery. Thanks to the partnership of the Ridley Eye Foundation in the UK, the hospital in Menouf is able to offer the surgery for a third of the real cost. This makes it accessible for people from the villages.

News from Ethiopia

The Gambella Centre in action

The Gambella Anglican Centre has been open a year and is flourishing. The opening was a day of celebration for church and community, with dignitaries representing the donors, the church and the state. At that time, the library, office and priest's house were in use. Since then more buildings have been completed and furnished, and the original vision has been realised.

On any day there are young people playing basketball and football, others studying in the library with textbooks or computers; literacy trainers translating into local languages; the Annak choir practising; the clergy meeting for prayer or bible study; the health facilitators being trained in hygiene and disease prevention; as well as the administrators and the fundraisers in the offices. We give thanks to God for the fulfilling of this vision.

www.FriendsAnglicanEthiopia.org.uk

Christians in Egypt

The future for Egypt's Christians is far from clear, just as the future of Egypt's government is far from clear. The Christians may hope that a liberal and pluralist democracy will emerge but others will be looking for an Islamic Republic. In fact the military may continue to govern and frustrate both those hopes. Here we consider the recent background to current disputes.



Pope Shenouda III

Of Egypt's 82 million population it is estimated around 10% are Christians, of which by far the greater number are Coptic, the most ancient and the largest Christian community in the Middle East. The Copts stand to lose more than any other group in Egypt's current drift following the fall of Mubarak's unpopular autocracy.

One of the strange ironies is that the tyrants who have ruled Middle East countries in despotic fashion have generally been very supportive of the small Christian minorities in their midst. The downfall of Saddam Hussein in Iraq was celebrated in the Christian west but led to the flight of more than 400,000 Iraqi Christians who feared the new situation more than the old. Most arrived in Syria where they now live and worship under the protection of the Assad regime which most western countries despise and would like to see toppled. In Libya the apostolic vicar Bishop Giovanni Martinelli declared that Catholics had fled Libya in vast numbers since NATO launched its attacks and the Catholic population fell from 100,000 to 5,000 and the Orthodox congregation had been reduced from a thousand to a dozen. In Egypt, Mubarak's regime included Coptic Christians in the Cabinet and the government had the confidence of the Coptic Pope, Shenouda III. In fact when the Copts feared an attack at their Christmas midnight mass, Mubarak's sons were present as a gesture of solidarity.

All these leaders shared one thing in common—they were secular leaders who lived in fear of a rise of the religious fundamentalism that could overthrow them. Christians also feared the rise of that same radical Islam and that is how the ruthless leaders and the Christian minorities became wedded to each other.

William Dalrymple (*Guardian Oct 10th*) writes that a generation ago, most Egyptians chose names for their children which could be either Christian or Muslim, such as Karim or Adel. Now they tend to give their children names such as Mohammed or Girgis (George) that immediately define their sectarian affiliation. Also, the adoption of the *hijab* by Muslim women has left

Coptic women exposed and subject to abuse. In the face of discrimination the Copts have tended to form their own schools and social clubs, keeping their distance from the Muslim majority. At the same time, the Copts have seen their political influence diminish: under Mubarak's last government there was still one Coptic provincial governor and two Coptic ministers. But unlike the days of Nasser and Sadat, no senior policemen are Copts, no judges, no university vice chancellors, no military generals.

When the Arab Spring began, the demonstrations were a model of sectarian amity, with Muslim and Christian demonstrators protecting each other from the violence of the police and the regime's thugs. But a spate of anti-Coptic riots followed, which the army did very little to stop. In May, churches were attacked by Salafist mobs after rumours spread that a Muslim woman had been kidnapped by Copts. The army looked on as the churches burned, encouraging radicals to take the law into their own hands elsewhere. The dilemma and fears of the Copts mirror that of Christian minorities across the Middle East.

The Arab Spring, it is widely feared, could yet mark the onset of the final Christian winter for the forgotten faithful of the Middle East. Only elections and the advent of sympathetic and stable democratic governments across the region is likely to allay such fears. Dalrymple concludes that at the moment this outcome seems less likely with every passing day.

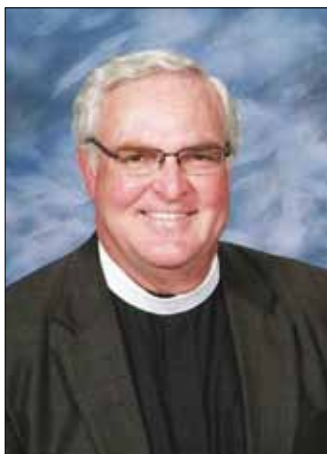
Editor

St. George's College, Jerusalem

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.

Dr. Graham Smith Appointed New Dean of Studies

The Rt Revd Suheil Dawani, Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem and chair of the St. George's College Foundation, has appointed the Revd Dr. Graham Smith as Dean of St. George's College in succession to Revd. Dr. Stephen Need. Bishop Dawani said "God has indeed delivered to us the right man at this time for this ministry."



Fr. Smith has been ordained in the Episcopal Church for over thirty seven years and has served as rector of St. David's Episcopal Church, Glenview, Illinois for the past nineteen years. Fr. Smith's extensive experience in church development, outreach and hospitality in the parishes he has served will find good use in his new post as Dean of St. George's College. The College is a centre for adult continuing education for members of the Anglican Communion, though is open to all who wish to register for the College's courses.

The College is located on the grounds of the Cathedral Church of St. George the Martyr and is only a few minutes walk from the Old City of Jerusalem. Offering study pilgrimages throughout the year, the College welcomes anyone with a serious interest in the rich heritage of the Holy Land. The College is one of over thirty institutions of education and health care which are sponsored by the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem throughout the Middle East in Gaza, Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon.

Fr. Smith is married to Sherry and they are the parents of two adult children, a son Ryan who is married to Krista and a daughter Trina. The appointment was effective from first week in September.

Courses in 2012

Palestine of Jesus

12 – 25 January
14 – 27 March
23 May – 5 June
14 – 27 June
20 July – 2 August
17 – 30 October
8 – 21 November
5 – 18 December

The Bible and its Setting

31 January – 13 February

Pilgrimage and Spirituality

21 February – 5 March

Risen with Christ

11 – 18 April

St. Paul and the Early Church

1 – 14 May

Youth Course

5 – 12 July

Social Landscape of the Bible

10 – 23 August

Ways in the Wilderness

4 – 17 September

Children of Abraham

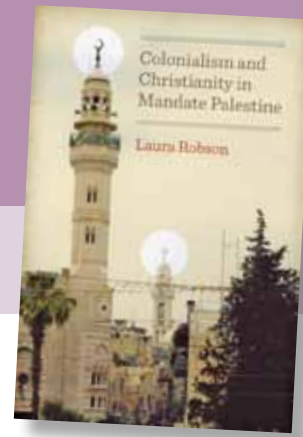
25 September – 6 October

Application forms and all information available at sgcjerusalem.org

Colonialism and Christianity in Mandate Palestine

Laura Robson

University of Texas Press, 2011. 239pp. 2 maps. ISBN 978-0-292-72653-6.
The author is Asst. Professor of History at Portland State University.



Drawing on a rich base of British archival materials, Arabic periodicals, and secondary sources, *Colonialism and Christianity in Mandate Palestine* brings to light the ways in which the British colonial state in Palestine exacerbated sectarianism. By transforming Muslim, Christian, and Jewish religious identities into legal categories, Laura Robson argues, the British ultimately marginalized Christian communities in Palestine. Robson explores the turning points that developed as a result of such policies, many of which led to permanent changes in the region's political landscapes. Cases include the British refusal to support Arab Christian leadership within Greek-controlled Orthodox churches, attempts to avert involvement from French or Vatican-related groups by sidelining Latin and Eastern Rite Catholics, and interfering with Arab Christians' efforts

to cooperate with Muslims in objecting to Zionist expansion.

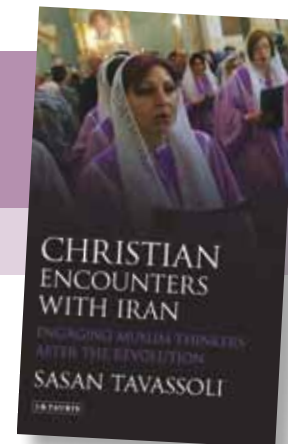
Challenging the widespread but mistaken notion that violent sectarianism was endemic to Palestine, *Colonialism and Christianity in Mandate Palestine* shows that it was intentionally stoked in the wake of British rule beginning in 1917, with catastrophic effects well into the twenty-first century.

"By focusing on the Christian experience in the Mandate era this work makes an important and provocative new contribution to the scholarship of Palestinian history in clear and elegant prose" Heather J. Starkey, Professor of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, University of Pennsylvania.

Christian Encounters with Iran

Sasan Tavassoli

London; I. B. Tauris, 2011. pp 305. £56.50



One of the little known aspects of Iran since the 1979 Islamic Revolution is the changing interaction with Christianity by a section of the Shi'i thinkers and religious leaders (ulema).

Sasan Tavassoli, an Iranian Presbyterian minister now resident in the USA, examines these shifts in understanding in this publication of his Birmingham University Ph.D thesis. He does not focus on the situation of Christians in Iran itself but surveys three areas of interaction.

First he looks at the range of approaches found in literature on Christianity from Muslim sources produced in Iran since 1979. He detects a move from traditional anti-Christian polemics to a more descriptive and objective understanding of Christian thought, including a wide range of translation of the work of western theologians.

Second he provides an overview and analysis of the engagement of governmental and non-governmental dialogue and research centres based in Tehran and the religious city of Qum with Christians of other countries including the Church of England in the period of Ayatollah Khatami's presidency. This has sadly declined since 2005. These show a marked departure from traditional debates to a deeper search for mutual

understanding.

Finally he undertakes a detailed study of the writings of three of the

most prominent Shi'i Muslim intellectuals who, he believes, have set the stage for a more fruitful intellectual Muslim-Christian encounter for the next generation of Muslim thinkers.

His book supports the view that among the paradoxes of the Islamic Revolution there is an increased fascination, even among the younger generation of Iranians studying to become ulema, with the study of other religions.

Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali, returning from leading the early dialogues between Church of England theologians and representatives drawn from the Iranian study centres, commented on the detailed knowledge of the Iranian representatives of Christian and Anglican theology and the seriousness with which they engaged with Christian thought. This important book, although expensive, provides an informed overview and background to what has been a hopeful trend in the currents of intellectual thinking in Iran.

John Clark

Obituaries



John Joly OBE

John Joly was born on November 12, 1924 and died on July 2, 2011, aged 86. He was born into a distinguished Levantine family and succeeded his father as chairman of Henry Heald and Co, a British trading and shipping company in Beirut that is one of the oldest in the Middle East. His daughter succeeded him and is still the chief executive. His great-grandfather had been British Vice-Consul in Izmir (then Smyrna) and his grandfather went from Smyrna to the Ottoman Bank in Cyprus before settling in Beirut. Joly spoke Arabic and French fluently and was a pillar of the British community

in the Lebanon. One of the family achievements was the building and maintenance of All Saints church which occupied three generations of the Joly family. The land had been purchased by the first generation in 1903. The deeds were deposited with Bishop Blyth in Jerusalem. Later transferred to SPG and finally passed to JMET. The building was completed and the church consecrated in 1929. John Joly's father and grandfather had been interned in Turkey during the first World War and his father worked for the Palestinian administration in Jerusalem during the second World War. In their absence the church and the business had been faithfully cared for by their Lebanese colleagues, mostly Moslems. On the death of his father in 1957 John Joly succeeded to the business and to the diocesan responsibilities. He was churchwarden throughout the years of the Civil War during which the church was vandalised and used as a military vantage point. It was restored and reconsecrated by Bishop Samir Kaffity in 1992 and is now known as the International Church. For his services to the community in Beirut, and for his constant support for successive British ambassadors to Lebanon, he was appointed OBE in 1973.

Rt. Revd. John Edward Brown

Third Bishop in Cyprus and the Gulf

John Edward Brown who was born on 13th July 1930, died on 23rd October 2011 after a life of service in the Anglican Church. He was educated at Wintringham Grammar School in Grimsby and was ordained in 1956 following his training at Kelham Theological College. He began his long association with the Middle East as chaplain at St George's Cathedral Jerusalem where he was also a master at the attached school. On his return to England he served a curacy in Reading and in 1960 began a four year term in Sudan, then a part of the Middle East province. Back in England he was Vicar of Stewkley and later Rural Dean of Sonning before being made Archdeacon of Berkshire in 1978. Nine years later he was made Bishop in Cyprus and the Gulf where he served until his retirement in 1995. In retirement he was an honorary assistant bishop in Lincoln diocese. The funeral service was held in Cleethorpes, his home town.

Bishop John will be remembered for establishing interfaith dialogue before it was common or fashionable. He had good working relations with the Shaikh of Ras al-Khaimah, with the Mufti of Oman, the Crown Prince of Kuwait and the rulers in the Emirates. One of his achievements was negotiating with the Grand Mufti of the Yemen the return of the garrison church which had been requisitioned when the British withdrew in 1967. He promised the church would build a clinic to serve the people and the Grand Mufti issued a *fatwa* that Christians should be permitted to worship freely 'just as Moslems do in Britain'. In his retirement Bishop John continued to write and lecture about Christian/Moslem relations and he published '*A Way in the Wilderness*' a guide to encourage prayer for the Middle East. He is survived by his wife Rosemary and son Richard.



From the Chairman...

The upheavals that are bringing change to the Middle East have continued since our summer issue. As I write the results of the election in Tunisia are announced, in Libya Colonel Gaddafi's body is buried in secret and in Syria demonstrations against the government move into their seventh month with over 3000 deaths.

Caught up in all this change are the Christians of the region, who are not often mentioned in the news headlines, unless some major tragedy takes place such as the killing of 24 Coptic Christians in Cairo at the beginning of October – the latest in a series of incidents affecting the Copts since the bombing of a church in Alexandria on New Year's eve.

There have been some remarkable responses to the unrest typified by the Episcopal Church in Egypt's use of its social centres to provide support for the poor and unemployed (pages 16-17). It was mentioned in our summer issue, but the support in terms of food aid and small loans continues and the bishop sends moving weekly reports.

One of the consequences of the change and unrest is that a long-term trend of the emigration of indigenous Christians from the region has increased. Ways of addressing this was the focus of the Conference that the Archbishop of Canterbury held in July (see centre pages). One outcome of that conference was a call to increase financial support for the Church and its institution serving the wider population in Jerusalem and the Middle East. And JMECA, of course, has long been a channel for such support.

JMECA's role is to encourage support in prayer, money and personal service the religious and charitable work of the four Anglican dioceses. Over the past months we have developed the ways we can share news to encourage prayer. Shirley Eason our Secretary/Administrator writes of the launch of our re-designed website (page 3) www.jmecca.org.uk. This will enable us to add news and reports on a regular basis as they reach us. So do list our website as one of your favourites to check regularly.

The Church in the Middle East can be remembered in the legacies we leave and we include with this issue

a leaflet, which the Treasurer has prepared, about leaving a bequest for use in the Middle East to help those considering how to dispose of their estates.

In the course of the next six months we will be celebrating both Christmas and Easter. There has been a long tradition of Church of England churches contributing their Good Friday collections to the ministry of the Anglican Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East through JMECA. Given the situation in the region why not encourage your parish to continue this tradition next Easter – and why not consider a special gift at Christmas as well.

John Clark

The Treasurer says...

I always enjoy receiving my pack of ten copies of *Bible Lands*, my own and those I distribute to neighbours and friends at my Parish church. It is good to see what wonderful work is being done in our Province, helped by the funds that JMECA and our other charities provide, and read the informed comment on the many pressing issues in the region.

Bible Lands is lovingly put together by our Editor who gives his time without cost to JMECA. However the printing and mailing to readers all over the world is expensive and we are looking at ways to keep this cost to a minimum. Each edition costs around £4,000 to print and distribute. There are ways you can help us reduce the cost:

The latest and past editions of *Bible Lands* are available on our new website as you will see in the page 3 article. Will you consider being taken off the mailing list and reading the magazine on-line? If so please email us at secretary@jmecca.eclipse.co.uk Also if you receive a number of copies for distribution can you please review the number you receive and make sure they are all needed?

John Pringle

STOP PRESS: US aid withdrawal hits Diocesan programme

American anger with the Palestinian authority for seeking statehood through the UN against their wishes seems to have resulted in severe cuts to aid programmes for Arab children. The US has without warning cut funding for several independent Palestinian Christian NGOs. Those affected include the diocese of Jerusalem's Princess Basma Centre for Disabled Children on the Mount of Olives which has heard it will not receive the promised \$100,000 for a community-based rehabilitation programme. Maha Tarayra, deputy director of the Princess Basma Centre, said, "This decision will deprive so many disabled children in the West Bank of the quality care they desperately need." Another Christian leader said "This is a scandal. There cannot be any sense or justice in the US Congress punishing disabled children in the West Bank just because their president asked for UN recognition of the Palestinian state."

Reported from Baptist Times, 28th October

Praying round the Province



The Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East,
home to the three Abrahamic faiths
and the centre of the world's political conflicts,
asks for your prayers.

1st **The Presiding Bishop of the Province**, The Most Revd. Dr. Mouneer Anis.

● **THE DIOCESE OF JERUSALEM AND THE MIDDLE EAST**

2nd **The Bishop**, Rt. Revd Suheil Dawani and his wife, Shafeeqa. For wisdom as he leads the church in Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. The Cathedral staff and Canon Hosam Nahoum, chaplain to the Arab congregation.

3rd **The clergy** serving the parishes in Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon and the congregations who keep the faith and sustain the churches in troubled times.

4th **The hospitals**, and centres that tend the sick: St. Luke's Nablus, Alhi Arab hospital Gaza, Penman Clinic Zebabdeh.

5th **The schools** that prepare the next generation: St. George's Jerusalem, the International School Jerusalem, Arab Episcopal School Ramallah, Vocational Training Centre Ramallah, Christ's School Nazareth, St. John's School Haifa, The Ahliyyah School for Girls, the Bishop's Kindergarten and the Bishop's School for Boys Amman, The Schneller Vocational Training Institute Amman, St. Saviour's School Zerqa, St. John Baptist School for Integration of the Blind Irbid, St. George's School Lod.

6th **The centres** that give hope to the hurt: Princess Basma Centre for Disabled Children Jerusalem, Holy Land Institute for the Deaf Salt, The Jofeh Community Rehabilitation Centre Jordan Valley, The Father Andeweg Institute for the Deaf Beirut, St. Luke's Centre for the Mentally Disabled Beirut, the Home for the Elderly Amman, The Episcopal Home for Children Ramallah.

7th **The guest houses** that provide hospitality and refreshment for pilgrims and all visitors, St. George's Jerusalem, St. Margaret's Nazareth, St. Andrew's Ramallah and Schneller Institute, Amman.

8th **The peace work** the Peace and Reconciliation Movement, The Kids4Peace programme, Sabeel and the people from all sides who seek peace and pursue it.

9th **The international courses** at St George's Jerusalem, the Dean of Studies, Reverend Dr. Graham Smith.

*Almighty God, from whom all thoughts of truth and peace proceed,
Kindle, we pray, in the hearts of all thy people the true love of peace*

● **THE DIOCESE OF IRAN**

10th **The Bishop**, Rt. Revd. Azad Marshall and his wife Lesley, and for his pastoral visits to Iran.

11th **The leaders**, Revd. Canon Nosratullah Sharifian and Mr. Baba Mohammadi in Ishafan, Revd. Christopher Edgar in Tehran, Mr. Ashrafi in Shiraz, and their faithful people.

12th **The congregations** of Ishafan, Tehran and Shiraz that they may contribute well to Iranian society and live full and free lives.

13th **The plans** to develop an Inter-faith Centre for dialogue in Tehran, that they may be fruitful.

14th **The Government**, the Supreme Leader, the President, the Governors and all in authority.

*Guide with thy pure and peaceable wisdom those who take counsel for the
nations of the earth, that in tranquillity thy kingdom may go forward, till the
earth is filled with the knowledge of thy love.*



Praying round the Province

**Blessed Lord, who faced the time of trial
have mercy on our failings and out of our weakness
bring your strength**

● THE DIOCESE OF CYPRUS AND THE GULF

- 15th **The Bishop**, Rt. Revd. Michael Lewis and his wife, Julia, and his Administrative staff.
- 16th **The Dean** of St. Paul's Cathedral Nicosia, Very Revd. John Tyrrell and his wife Carol.
The Dean of St. Christopher's Cathedral Bahrain, Very Revd. Christopher Butt and his wife Tricia.
- 17th **The Archdeacon of the Gulf**, Ven. Bill Schwartz and his wife Edith.
The Archdeacon of Cyprus Ven. Dr. John Holdsworth and his wife Sue.
- 18th **The clergy of Cyprus** serving the people of Kyrenia, Larnaca, Limassol, Ayia Nape, Paphos, Famagusta and for the faithful who serve those churches, the work of the Katafiyio Retreat House.
- 19th **The clergy of the Gulf**, serving the people of Dubai, Sharjah, Oman, Jebel Ali, Ras al Khaimeh, Aden, and the scattered congregations of the Arabian Peninsular who keep the faith privately.
- 20th **The church in Qatar**, and for Archdeacon Bill Schwartz who leads the building work and the appeal for funding.
- 21st **The congregation of Baghdad**, led by Canon Andrew White and Reverend Faiz Jerjas. The people of Iraq, of all faiths, and all the Iraqi Christians who are sheltering in other lands.
- 22nd **The political leaders** of the ten jurisdictions, in Cyprus, in Iraq and in the Gulf States, that all may seek and make just and stable governments.

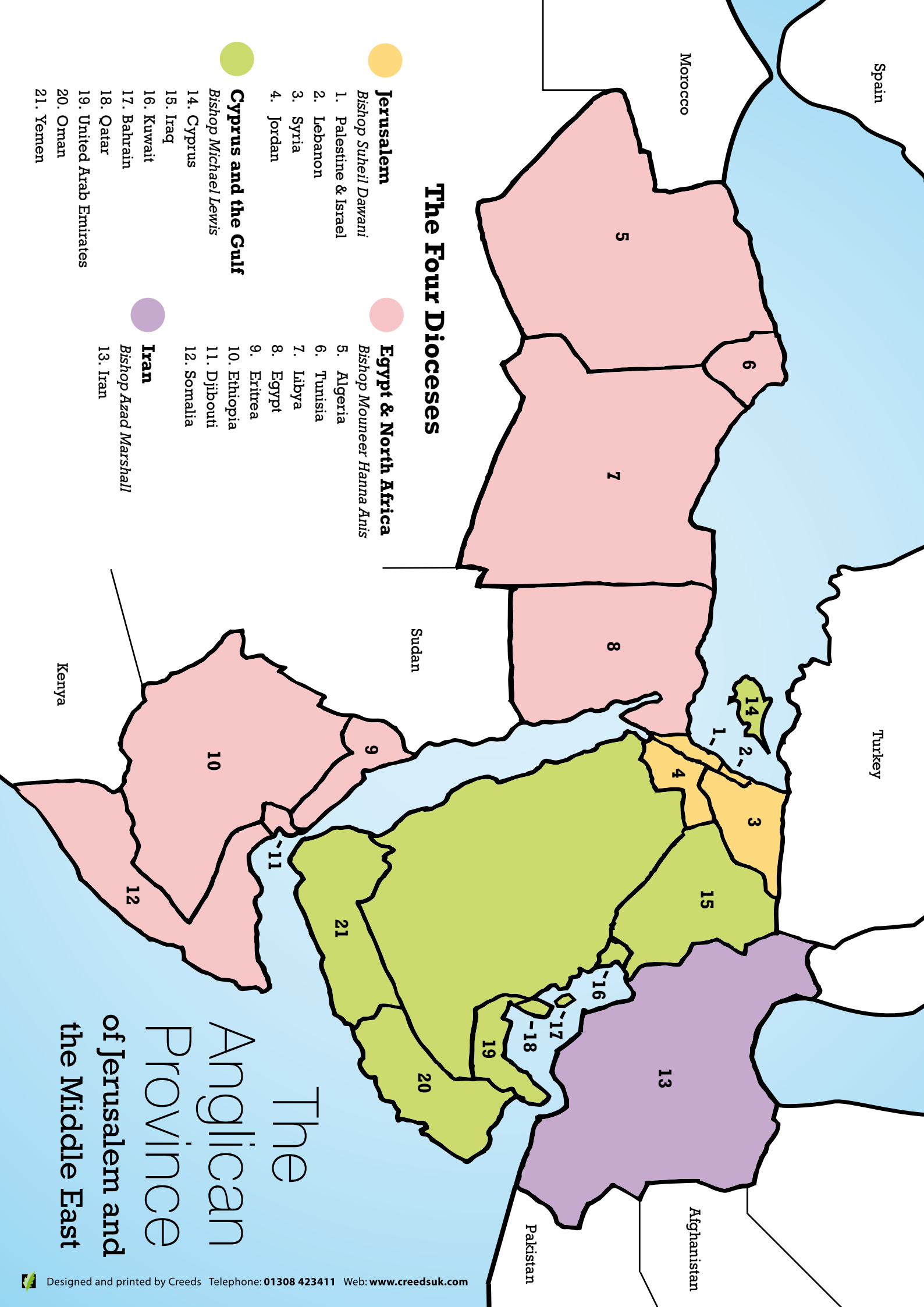
*Almighty and everlasting God, creator and giver of all good gifts, mercifully hear our prayers
and grant to this diocese all things needful for its welfare*

● DIOCESE OF EGYPT with N. AFRICA and THE HORN OF AFRICA

- 23rd **The Bishop**, the Most Revd. Dr. Mouneer Anis and his wife, Nancy, and the Interim Dean of the Cathedral, Rt. Revd Derek Eaton and his wife, Alice.
- 24th **The Bishop in North Africa**, Rt. Revd Bill Musk and his wife, Hillary, and all those who have borne brave witness in Libya
- 25th **The Ethiopian mission** and all who seek the Kingdom in the Horn of Africa .
- 26th **The clergy** who serve the church day by day in Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Ethiopia and Eritrea, and the congregations who sustain them.
- 27th **The Institutions** that serve the community: The Harpur Hospital in Cairo, Health Centre in Sadat City, the Episcopal School Menouf, the work with the deaf, with refugees, with prisoners and in other areas of welfare and social need.
- 28th **The Theological School** in Alexandria with its Principal Revd. Emad Azmi, all his staff and students, that it may be a place of sound learning and good fellowship.
- 29th **The political leaders** of the many and diverse nations that form the diocese, that Government may be just and sound.

*Strengthen the faithful, protect the children, comfort the sick, uplift the fallen
bring us all to be of one heart and one mind within the fellowship of thy holy church*

- 30th **The Jerusalem and the Middle East Church Association**, its Chairman Mr. Richard Owens, the chair of Trustees Mr. John Clark, the Administrator Mrs Shirley Eason and all whose gifts, past and present, sustain it.



The Four Dioceses

Jerusalem

Bishop Suheil Dawani

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

Egypt & North Africa

Bishop Mouneer 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