



## Diocese has New Start

AS 2008 draws to a close, the Diocese is hoping that the ordination and enthronement of Bishop Wyn Evans will begin to draw a line under this difficult year. After his election at the beginning of September, the new bishop made it clear that he wanted to reassure, and help unify, the diocese, following the events surrounding the departure of the last bishop, Carl Cooper. He paid tribute to the positive legacy of that episcopate in terms of Venturing in Mission, which he believes will continue and develop.

For the last six months Archbishop Barry Morgan has been at the helm. During that time the Catalyst event was held, in which he played a full part. He also officiated at the Chrism Mass in the cathedral and at the Ordination in June. Following the Bishop of Bangor's death he has had to play a similar part in the life of the diocese of Bangor, and will be looking forward to returning to Llandaff priorities following the consecrations.

In a separate development, the archdeacon of Cardigan, Ven Andy John, was elected as Bishop of Bangor in October and he shared the consecration service in Llandaff cathedral with Bishop Wyn. A packed congregation heard a sermon by the new leader of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, an old colleague of Bishop Wyn, which provided a pointer to his ecumenical interests.

The new bishop's first priority will be to visit all the deaneries of the diocese. He will also need to



draw together a new senior team through the appointments of a new archdeacon and dean. Several other appointments are overdue, including Lay Training Officer, Children's

Officer, Youth Officer, Director of Education, Social Responsibility Officer and Diocesan Director of Ordinands. Following the recent senior staff residential (*see page 12*)

announcements are expected soon. Our new bishop has worked in all three archdeaconries during a 37 year ministry that has been conducted entirely in the diocese of St Davids.

His appointment has been welcomed as providing indigenous stability at a precarious time, and in the expectation that his style will allow space for reflection and local response.

## Menter DVD – At Last!

THE Menter DVD has finally arrived. It will be launched at a special day-long session, attended by the new bishop, on December 8th where it will be introduced by John Holdsworth and Andy John who have been jointly involved in its production. The day is set to include an overview of what the DVD sets out to do, and the understanding of evangelism it is based on. This will say that the DVD is not the film of the book. It can stand alone, but does

follow the main headings of the published Menter course. It will also describe some of the principles upon which the DVD is based. These include attempting to make a very strong link between the traditions and Biblical accounts which have formed Christian belief on the one hand; and contemporary Christian practice and witness on the other.

The day will also provide an opportunity to preview a couple of the sessions and to get practical

help with the various ways in which the material could be used in parishes and elsewhere. The hope is that the new DVD will provide one engine for the development of Venturing in Mission in the diocese. Archdeacon John Holdsworth said: "Our main hope is that people find the DVD interesting and engaging. If that happens they will certainly want to talk about the issues it contains."

### Contributions to *Pobl Dewi*

We welcome articles of interest from readers and, in particular, we would like to encourage submission of articles in Welsh.

**Revd Nicholas Cale** [nickthevic@parishofwiston.co.uk](mailto:nickthevic@parishofwiston.co.uk),

is the lead editor of the next issue and will be pleased to hear from anyone who would like to submit an article.

The other regional editors can be contacted as follows:

**Tessa Briggs** [tessa@ygilan.net](mailto:tessa@ygilan.net)

**Revd Don MacGregor** [don@macgregors.wanadoo.co.uk](mailto:don@macgregors.wanadoo.co.uk),

or articles can be posted to:

*Pobl Dewi*, The Diocesan Office, Abergwili, Carmarthen, SA31 2JG, marked for the attention of 'The Editor'.

# Adroddiad Enid Morgan ar drafodaeth fywiog Menywod mewn Eglwys a Chymdeithas

*Catalyst Issues Tent: In the session on women in church and society Eluned Morgan argued the need for positive discrimination to ensure a more level representation of men and women in public life. Baroness Ilora Finlay spoke against allowing so called euthanasia, and Enid Morgan spoke about the role of women in the church, both in the parishes and in the house of Bishops*

40 munud yn unig a roddwyd i dair gwraig drafod lle gwagedd mewn byd ac eglwys. Daeth criw da i wrando ar Eluned Morgan, Aelod o Senedd Ewrop, y Farwnes Ilora Finlay sy'n aelod o Dŷr Arglywyddi a'r Parchedig Ganon Enid Morgan a fu am gyfnod yn gyfrifol am Fwrdd Cenhadu'r Eglwys yng Nghymru.

Siaradodd Eluned Morgan am y cynnydd sylwddol yn y nifer o wragedd yn y Senedd yn Llundain, Brwsel a Chaerdydd wrth i'r Blaid Lafur fynnu cydwysedd mewn rhestrau ethol. Bu anhawsterau a cholledion oherwydd y polisi ond dyna oedd y pris am sicrhau na chollid doniau gwagedd. Barn Eluned oedd bod yn rhaid wrth gamau pendant, fel gosod cyfartaledd nifer, er mwyn gweithredu egwyddor a newid teimlad a naws unrhyw sefydliad. Yr oedd yn amlwg ei bod hi'n ymfalchio bod y cyfartaledd gwagedd yn Senedd Cymru bellach yn uwch nag yn unrhyw wlad arall – er i'r cyfartaledd fod yn isel iawn am flynyddoedd.

Siaradodd Ilora Finlay, sy'n arbennigwr ar ofal lliniaru i gleifion nad oes gwella iddynt, yn ddwys ac



argyhoeddiedig iawn. Yr oedd hi'n gwrthwynebu unrhyw gam i alluogi pobi roi terfyn ar eu bywydau a'u dioddefaint. Credai hi y byddai hawl o'r fath yn tansellio'r berthynas rhwng

meddyg a'r claf, a rhwng cleifion a'u teuluoedd hefyd. Ni chredai hi fod euthanasia, marw da, yn ddigrifiad priodol o beth fyddai'n digwydd pe bai modd dwyn oes i ben cyn ei bryd. Byddai

ymyrryd yn y ddeddf bresennol i ddilyn yr hyn a ganiateid yn yr Iseldiroedd neu'r Swsidir yn gamsyniad mawr.

Yr oedd yn drueni na cheid mwy o amser i drafod y pwnc hwn gan fod y gynulleidfa yn ysu i godi pwyntiau ar sail ei sgwrs fer ond awdurdodol.

Siaradodd Enid am le allweddol y gwagedd yn yr eglwys, a hynny yn sgil y penderfyniad i beidio ag ordeinio gwagedd yn esgobion. Yr oedd hi'n teimlo bod cyfle wedi ei golli i gamu ymlaen ar yr egwyddor o dderbyn gwraig. Buasem yn dilyn esiampl yr eglwys Anglicanaidd yn yr Iwerddon ac yn yr Alban wrth wneud hynny. Mae'r egwyddor wedi ei phasio yno, er nad oes gwraig yn esgob eto. Pan fyddai gwraig gymwys yn cael ei henwi, ni fyddai angen trafod pellach ar yr egwyddor. Y perygl nawr yng Nghymru fyddai drysu rhwng yr egwyddor a chymhwyster gwagedd unigol. Soniodd hefyd am bwysigrwydd magu mwy o blwc ymhlith gwagedd yn y plwyfi i gymeryd cyfrifoldebau cyhoeddus, efallai yn arbennig ymhlith y Cymry Cymraeg.

## RB report shows behind-the-scenes work of church

LOOK carefully at the back of your church this autumn and you should find a white, attractively designed, A4 sized document in a well placed spot, accessible to all.

It's not one of the flyaway leaflets the vergers has to weigh down with hymn books – this is a substantial tome, printed in recycled paper and well spaced, easy-to-read lettering. But don't let the size put you off – you'll only have to read half of it as it's in Welsh and English!

The Annual Reports and Accounts 2007 of the Representative Body of the Church in Wales is now out and, despite its cumbersome title, it's doing its best to catch the eye of all members of the congregation. Peep inside and you'll find a wealth of useful facts and figures about the work of the "support arm" of the Church.

It tells you, for example, how financially stable the Church in Wales is, where it invests its money and what it spends it on. It explains the services the Cardiff-based Representative Body – or "RB" – provides to support your local church and clergy. And it also has a helpful reference section so you can find out how the RB is run and who's who on the various committees.

The report is introduced by the RB chairman, Lord David Rowe-Beddoe. He points out that a new arrangement, introduced in 2007, to fund churches has had a positive reception. The RB now gives a "block grant" to each diocese in Wales which they can choose how to spend themselves. In fact, the RB meets more than a third of the Church's total expenditure – a much higher contribution to dioceses than is the case in other provinces.

Several examples of the services the RB provides to support the ministry of the church are highlighted in the report. These include: *Property advice and grants; Child protection; Re-ordering churches; Websites; Pensions; Membership and Finance and Training clergy.*

If you can't find a copy of the Annual Report at the back of your church, you can get it online at:

<http://www.churchinwales.org.uk/structure/rebody/>

or for a Welsh version go to <http://www.churchinwales.org.uk/strwythur/corffycynrychiolwyr/>

Parishes can also order more copies by contacting the Representative Body at 39 Cathedral Rd, Cardiff.

## Catalyst Reacts with Schools

*A CATALYST starts something going, and Daphne Evans describes the initiative in schools following our 'Catalyst' day . . .*

A CATALYST pack produced by the Diocesan Schools committee has been delivered to all Church Schools in the Diocese. It contains prayers, readings, poetry, word searches, pictures taken in the Schools' Marquee on the day of the Festival and a photograph of Pentip School's Millennium window. Two CD-ROMs are included: one provides a tour of the Parish Church of St. Elli, Llanelli and the other features the marvellous music performed by Wiston V.A. School under their conductor Seimon Morris at Catalyst.

There is also a full page of activities for schools to consider for the future including the development of prayer corners, stable trails, prayer gardens, opportunities for pilgrimage, composing hymns and even staff away days at Ffald y Brenin Retreat Centre!

We hope that the pack will stimulate both staff and children in our Church schools to use the

Catalyst experience in a positive way. We also hope that they will be encouraged to try new ideas and to further develop the Christian ethos in their school communities. The Schools Committee is most grateful to Mrs Jean Voyle Williams and Revd Brian Witt for delivering all of the packs personally.



## Catalyst – What Next?

*Paul Mackness, Secretary to the Catalyst Planning Group, gives some thought to the future*

IT WAS always the view of the Planning Group that Catalyst should be a springboard to lead to other things. Since the success of Catalyst on 5th July, many have asked "What next?". The Senior Team and the Planning Group have all been keen to ensure that Catalyst was not just a stand-alone event but should cause new things to happen.

The Planning Group met not long after the event to review the day and look to the future. A full report of the day will be delivered to Bishop Wyn and the Senior Team in due course. However, a number of general recommendations as to how we might go forward have emerged.

1. A Diocesan event similar to Catalyst should take place every eight years and at least three years should be given for planning for the next event.

2. Following the success of the Resources Area, the idea was mooted of putting on a Christian

Resources Exhibition regularly, either on a Diocesan or Archidiaconal level.

3. The Worship sessions proved extremely popular and there appears to be a genuine desire in the Diocese to have the opportunity to experience different styles and traditions of worship. Putting on Archidiaconal Worship "Taster Days" would be a way of meeting this need.

4. All who took part in the Catalyst Choir thoroughly enjoyed it. Other opportunities for people to come together as a choir are suggested.

5. *Catalyst News* was a great success, it was felt that this was a form of communication that could be used again in the future.

The Planning Group is grateful to all those who have taken time to pass on comments and recommendations for the future. Any further suggestions for the future can be forwarded via the website or the Diocesan Communications Team.

## Bishop's Biography

OUR newly enthroned bishop, the Rt Rev John Wyn Evans (known as Wyn), has served as Dean of St Davids Cathedral for the past 14 years, during which time he was the driving force behind the £5.5m Cathedral restoration project, which included the acclaimed rebuilding and expansion of the historic cloisters area, and has secured the future of the building for generations to come.

He said he was stunned but honoured to have been chosen as bishop of the diocese in which he has served since his ordination. "We are fortunate that Bishop Carl gave the diocese a sense of purpose and direction which I look forward to continuing."

### Son of a vicar

Wyn Evans, 61, grew up in Aberystwyth, the son of the Vicar of Aberystwyth Efion Evans. He was educated at Ardwyn Grammar School, Aberystwyth, then studied archaeology at the University of Wales, Cardiff. He trained for the priesthood at St Michael's College, Llandaff 1968-71 and has served all his ministry in the Diocese of St Davids.

Ordained as a priest in 1972, Wyn served as a minor canon at St Davids Cathedral from 1972-75.

After a period of research at Oxford University he returned to Pembrokeshire, serving as Rector of Llanfallteg with Clunderwen and Hellan Amgoed with Llangan from 1977-82. He was Diocesan Warden of Ordinands from 1978-83, chaplain of Trinity College of Carmarthen 1982-90 and Diocesan Director of Education 1982-1992. He was made an honorary canon of St Davids Cathedral 1988 and served as a canon from 1990 to 1994. From 1990-94 he was Dean of Chapel, Trinity College Carmarthen and head of department of religious studies 1991-94. He was made Dean and Precentor of St Davids Cathedral in 1994 as well as Vicar of St Davids. In 2001, the parish was enlarged into a Rectorial Benefice and renamed Dewisland, where he served as rector.

A keen historian, the bishop is an honorary fellow of the University of Wales, Lampeter, and a leading expert on the lives of the early Welsh saints and St Davids Cathedral. He has recently edited a book titled, *St David of Wales – Cult, Church and Nation*.

He is married to Diane, a professional potter in St Davids.

# The Bishop at Home

*Before his ordination, Don MacGregor interviewed Bishop Wyn at his home in the deanery at St Davids . . .*



### What is it like being chosen as bishop? How did you feel at first?

It's quite strange, really, because it's never happened to me before! It happens to very few people. Although it was something that there was a possibility of in the electoral college, when it actually happens to you, it is quite stunning. For various reasons I'm glad that, in a sense, I've had quite a long 'run in' – because of the Bangor elections, there was a longer gap between the election and the consecration, but those eight weeks have gone very quickly, I can tell you! So I did feel stunned and quite humbled really. Its interesting when you realise that you'll be the 128th bishop in sequence to David, who was in this place 1,500 years or so ago. I'm slowly coping with that idea!

### The diocese has been launched on the Venturing in Mission direction. Do you see that continuing in the future?

Yes indeed. After all, we only formally adopted Venturing in Mission about three years ago, and I think there is a lot more to work through in order to bring about the vision, I've said before that I am extremely lucky to be following Carl because of the Venturing in Mission initiative, which means that I start from a much higher 'base' than otherwise. Of course the senior staff thought through the idea for a year or so before it went out into the diocese and I was fully involved in that from the beginning. When I did my part in it at the start, the whole idea I wanted to focus on was the local church. That catholic church with a local focus is what we are about because, when you think of this

diocese, it is really a lot of very small churches whose life is perfectly valid. I remember the late bishop of Bangor saying, in this context, that a satsuma is not a failed orange; they have their own dynamic. That sense of locality is something we need to focus on, because all of us live as creatures of time and space, and we do get attached to places. Of course, having looked after the cathedral for the last fourteen years, it has a remarkable feel to it with the whole sense of place and of space and of what goes on inside it, but this is as true of a small country church or an urban church or a modern church or whatever, as it is of St Davids Cathedral. So that is quite a vital tool in the whole Venturing in Mission toolkit.

### You have given some hints there as to your direction, but where would you like to start in your episcopal oversight?

The whole sense of place is interesting. In his visitation, the archdeacon of St Davids, said the responses he'd had from clergy indicated that they wanted to see me out in the diocese. That is what I want to do as well, to get out and around the whole diocese, systematically over the next year, deanery by deanery, as my predecessors have done, and that will give me a feel and help me to re-engage – because I was a country parson for five years on the borders of Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire which was one of the best experiences in my life. I was brought up in Aberystwyth, and the whole urban-rural situation is changing and even affects small towns like Fishguard in this diocese. There are changes in the cultural dimensions and patterns which now prevail and

I want to get out there and see what's going on really.

### You have been associated with St Davids for many years, and there have been rumours of you staying here – is there any truth in them?

I made the point, and it isn't just me that is making this point, the last four bishops have made it as well, that it makes sense to have a base here. Certainly with the last three bishops we did explore practical possibilities of getting a base for the bishop here, and that's really what I intend to do. Not just somewhere as a weekend retreat, but so that I can work from St Davids. One of the good things about Carl's episcopate was that he was very ready to come to the cathedral for those important elements in its life where the bishop should be part of his collegiate community, and there are about 11 or 12 occasions like that in the year. I'll obviously have to move to Carmarthen, because that's where the diocesan office and bishop's office are. At the moment I'm commuting the 100 mile round trip! As a bishop, connection with your cathedral is something which I think gives balance. The whole idea of

bishops moving away from their cathedrals really only happened in the 19th century, when they wanted to become country gentlemen. In our case, of course, it's different, it's 400 years, but it was an accident – what Bishop Fowler wanted was to live in Lamphey, but he lost Lamphey and the only thing left to him, having demolished the palace at St Davids, was Abergwili. The bishops have only lived there 400 years.

### You are known as an archaeologist as well as Cathedral Dean. Do you still do any academic work in that sphere?

Yes. Certainly in church history – I'm trying to finish an article at the moment. The deadline has receded by several months, I can tell you! The last thing we did here was to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Jonathan Freeman's monumental architectural and archaeological history of the cathedral and see where things have gone. Archaeology as such is about the building, but it also means getting back to the people who lived, used, built, and very often threw it away. It's the people as well as the buildings and what fascinates me, especially when you are on a site that has been occupied continuously like this one for such a long time, is how your predecessors had to cope with the same problems and probably the same kind of people and the solutions that they came up with. Remember that history and archaeology are never really about the past, they are always about being where you are now, to prepare you for the future.

### If, on the rare occasion, you get any time off, what do you like to do?

Walking, which I don't do often enough, and just visiting museums, art galleries and bookshops. Especially bookshops – I'm a book addict as you can see. That's going to be a major part of the shift!

### Through Pobl Dewi, what would you like to say to the people of St Davids Diocese?

In one sense, they know me, because I've served all my ministry here and my father was a parson in this diocese and I want to get to know them again. Its important that we walk together, we continue this path of discipleship, this venture in mission, because our function here isn't really to do with maintaining buildings or whatever, but it is preparing God's people for the kingdom.



*"Hee, Hee . . . They'll never notice . . ."*

# Family Group launched



SEPTEMBER 15th marked a special occasion for Plant Dewi, when a family support project opened its doors at St Davids Cathedral. The Bishop elect, who is very supportive of the project, welcomed everybody and launched the event. Partnership working is key to the success of the venture and showing their support on the day were representatives from Children's Services, Health, Education, Pembrokeshire County Council, St Davids City Council and the voluntary sector. Also present were members of the clergy including Rev Peter Lewis, who attracted interest on the first day through promoting the event on his Sunday morning broadcast.

Sue Fletcher, Project manager, Plant Dewi, said that "The launch was a great success and when the parents arrived on the first day we recognized why we had been called to set up the group. This is just the

beginning as it is hoped that a family centre will be developed in the old school situated on the boundary of the Cathedral grounds."

The family group aims to offer support, advice and a friendly listening ear to families in a safe, welcoming environment. It is a place where people can meet up with old friends, make new ones and hopefully help tackle the problem of rural isolation. It meets in the Cathedral in

the west cloisters every Monday from 9.30 am - 12.30 pm.

Heather Harrison who facilitates the group said that "The first two weeks have been positive with regular attendees and we have lots of activities planned for the future." For more information about the group please contact Heather on 01646 689095. If you would like to set up a group in your parish and would like us to help contact Plant Dewi on 01267 221551.



# Emmanuel in Haverfordwest



MANY of you will know Emmanuel Christian Bookshop in Haverfordwest. However, for those readers who do not, let me tell you a little about ourselves.

The shop carries a large range of Bibles, books, children's books, CDs, greeting cards, gifts and an extensive range of resources for children's work, Bible study and worship.

In addition, as part of our ministry to the Christian community we offer support to churches by supplying books and Christian literature for bookstalls, outreach events, or similar.

Part of our vision is also to reach those who are outside the Church and seeking answers to life's big questions. The shop for some people is a more accessible place than a church, so sometimes we find ourselves able to show and explain the Word of God to a person who has just plucked up courage to enter the shop and say "I don't know much about God but I think I'd like to buy a Bible". We even venture out from the shop to meet people – you may have seen us at the Pembrokeshire Show this year!

We love to meet new faces and old friends alike. Many people stop

for a chat as well as to browse through the books. Everyone who works in the shop is a volunteer and is there because they love the Lord and want to see His Word spread, so it is a joy when people share stories of how God is working in their lives or ministries.

The history of the bookshop is a story of faith. It opened on its present site by the river in 1982 through the vision of one woman. At that time it occupied one unit in the newly opened Riverside Market but over the following years the ministry grew, the shop moved from unit to unit gradually expanding to take over 4 units. This year the shop has undergone a refurbishment to provide a new, better environment for our customers.

There is more information including opening hours, on our website [www.emmanuelbooks.org.uk](http://www.emmanuelbooks.org.uk) or you can phone 01437 763651, or email [info@ecbooks.org.uk](mailto:info@ecbooks.org.uk).

We like to think we are a helpful, friendly bunch so why not call in!

# Shopping with Plant Dewi



THE Plant Dewi shop is located in King Street, Carmarthen and helps to raise funds to support the work of Plant Dewi. The shop is well stocked with clothes, bric a brac, books, household goods, toys, shoes etc, which have kindly been donated by the general public.

The shop has committed volunteers who help out in a number of ways according to the time they have to spare and the tasks they would like to do. It may be that they can give a few hours or a few days per week to sort clothes, iron, tag

stock or welcome and service the customers. Everyone's contribution is valued as they carry out their part to help the children, young people and families in our Diocese.

Volunteers say that they enjoy meeting new people and feeling part of the Plant Dewi family. If you feel able to spare time, however small, to join us in the shop, please contact Muriel Jones on 01267 238408 or simply call in. The opening hours are 9.30 to 4.00 pm Monday to Saturday.

# Plant Dewi Graduations



Plant Dewi staff celebrating their graduation on 8 July 2008 from Trinity College, Carmarthen. Their qualification centred around community work and the Christian mission.

**Final copy date for the next issue of**

**Pobl Dewi is February 22nd**

Lead regional editor is

Revd Nicholas Cale [nickthevic@parishofwiston.co.uk](mailto:nickthevic@parishofwiston.co.uk)

Plant Dewi Christmas cards are available in packs of 10 cards and may be purchased at the Plant Dewi shop, picked up from their offices or ordered by post. There are nine designs of card with a choice of inscription – English, Welsh, and bi-lingual.

Plant Dewi Offices: **Darkgate Buildings, 3 Red Street, Carmarthen SA31 1QL. Tel: 01267 221551.**

[info@plantdewi.co.uk](mailto:info@plantdewi.co.uk)

Shop: **21 King Street, Carmarthen. Tel: 01267 238408**

# R. S. Thomas Church Restored

by Joy Neal

WHAT a triumph for St Michael's, Eglwyfach – the work on the Apse roof above the chancel has been completed! We are now watertight, the beams treated, new slates applied to the north facing wall and the old slates used on the south wall that faces towards the main road. To all appearances one would not know the scale of the enterprise which has taken place.

That is what restoration work is all about. The church in its simple Georgian style has been maintained. Its CADW Grade 2\* listing denotes

that it is a building of some importance in the area. Part of the star listing is our link with the poet, Revd R. S. Thomas, who was Vicar of St Michael's from 1954-1967 and also because the satirist, Thomas Love Peacock, was married in the early part of the 19th century in the old building.

The restoration has not been achieved without considerable effort on the part of the parishioners and friends of St Michael's, near and far, who have donated generously of their time and from their own purses. Events included coffee

mornings, concerts, sponsored cycle rides and the summer festival of RS Thomas Poetry Reading that included the unveiling of the plaque in the Church porch donated by Paul James of James Memorials.

The PCC is grateful to everyone who has supported this endeavour, of which there are too many to name individually. However, particular thanks go to The Representative Body of the Church in Wales, St David's Board of Finance, Gwen and Margaret Davis Trust, Jane Hodge Foundation, Mitchell Trust, Gladstone Trust, All Churches



Trust, Laspen Trust, Oakdale Trust, Garfield Weston, Piggott Trust,

National Churches Trust and Ceredigion County Council.

## Biblical Fund-Raising?

Dorothy Cox describes the latest fund-raising event of a £¼m appeal

ST TUDWAL's Church, on the banks of the Cleddau River, between Neyland and Milford Haven, is in need of essential repairs amounting to £250,000. Grant-making bodies are being approached, but it is down to the small congregation to raise as much as they can and to ensure that the daunting red tape requirements are met.

The fund-raising campaign began in March and, in September, the parishioners held a 'Read the Bible in 7 Days' Challenge, whereby the Bible would be read continuously, from beginning to end, between the hours of 7am and 9pm daily for a week.

Appeals for readers and sponsors produced a list of those prepared to contribute and St Tudwal's Vicar, Revd Paul Flavell, launched the

event with the first reading. 47 readers were to follow including Stephen Crabb, MP, Paul Davies, AM, the Mayor of Neyland, representatives from all the churches in Neyland and, of course, St Tudwal's own parishioners. The prospect of reading aloud for an hour was not something that everyone relished and many were relieved to discover that there was never going to be a large audience. Some read alone, others brought a friend, and one lady arrived with three friends who all read for 15 minutes each!

There has been some very positive feedback from what was, originally, thought to be a somewhat peculiar idea. Comments received have included 'It is so nice to just sit in a peaceful spot and read the Bible for an hour', 'I had never read that

bit before' and 'Reading aloud makes it easier to understand.'

Six days later, the last verse of the Book of Revelation was read out and the Vicar rang the bell to mark the achievement, following which many of the readers gathered for celebratory tea and cake.

St Tudwal's is open daily for visitors, and those walking along the Coast Path often drop in to find that, alongside spiritual refreshment, coffee and tea are also available. Many visitors who called in during the Bible-reading week made a donation as they left.

This challenge not only raised more than £700 but also encouraged parishioners to continue their fund-raising efforts, which include ongoing jam and marmalade sales and a jewellery recycling scheme. The



next event will be a concert by Tempus on 12 December at St Tudwal's. For more details e-mail [cox@hazelbank111.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:cox@hazelbank111.fsnet.co.uk) or

call 01646 602464. Please come along and support us – you are assured of a warm welcome.

## A Sample of Samplers

*By this exemplar I am taught  
How letters great and small are wrought  
So by the example of the wise  
May I true virtue learn to prize*

WELSH Open Church Day 2008 and the National Year of Reading (NYOR) provided a wonderful opportunity, or excuse, to research and present an unusual form of English and Welsh texts to a local community, and subsequently, by chance, to children in a local school, and to teachers on in-service training and at the recent UKLA Conference in Cardiff

More than 25 samplers, those extraordinary examples of needlework skills, perseverance and devotion, were displayed in St Meilyr's Church, Llysyfrân, alongside descriptions of the individual works. Sponsorship from Chevron Ltd, and the Ecclesiastical Insurance Group and support from the Pembrokeshire NYOR team meant that we were able to produce a colourful souvenir

brochure to accompany the event, which was attended by about 100 visitors, on a very stormy Saturday in September. The church was tastefully decorated with autumn flowers: tea and home-made cakes were on offer, plus a stall with specially designed greet-ings cards and coasters featuring some of the exhibits.

The earliest 'examples' or samplers contained collections of stitches and patterns, and served primarily as reference 'books' for experienced needlewomen, but it is the samplers from the late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries which were represented here. By this time they began to be used for needlework training purposes, and many examples bear the names of schools and institutions (Bettws Board School, Ammanford, Narberth

Board School, Hafod Girls' School), as young schoolgirls spent a portion of their afternoons in class practising stitching of letters – and thereby learning moral rhymes and extracts from the Bible and other sacred texts.

English was the language of the schoolroom, and consequently there are fewer Welsh language samplers in existence (although there is no proven correlation between first language geographical areas and language of texts). The samplers inscribed in Welsh, one containing a verse from a William Williams Pantycelyn hymn, and one with a highly decorated Old Testament text may well have been worked at home, or in chapel Sunday schools.

Local samplers, that is from Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and particularly mid Pembrokeshire were well represented in the exhibition, with interesting examples from Ambleston, New Moat, Walton East, Llysyfrân and Narberth.

The exhibition, advertised on the website of the Churches Tourism Network Wales, in the local press and on the NYOR website, was a huge success with visitors from as far

afield as Cardiff and Hereford. It achieved what it set out to do – to get new people into the church, to realise the potential of country church buildings as exhibition centres, and to provide a cultural and religious experience, in a creative and

imaginative way – and a lady from Fishguard even brought in a sampler as a donation!

Chris S. Stephens  
Pembrokeshire Coordinator,  
National Year of Reading



## Archbishop Barry writes...

THE sudden resignation of Bishop Carl Cooper meant that, as Archbishop of the Province, I became responsible for the Diocese of St David's. I had not served in the diocese before, though ironically, having been brought up in the parish of Cwmaman, it was here that I was nurtured and encouraged in my early years. It was also the place where I was confirmed and accepted for ministry by Bishop John Richards. Having pastoral care of the diocese therefore for a short period, although I regret the circumstances under which it happened, was and has been for me, an enormous joy. I have enjoyed my visits to the diocese, especially for the Chrism Eucharist, the ordination, the Catalyst gathering and the licensing of Readers. I have kept in close touch with what has been going on through the Archdeacons and the Dean and I am indebted to them for all that they have done to keep the administration of the diocese going. I am personally delighted that the Dean has been chosen as the new bishop because he was brought up in the diocese and has served there throughout his ministry. He brings his great pastoral, spiritual and academic gifts, not just to the diocese but to the Bench of Bishops, and I look forward very much to working with him as a fellow bishop. He has held various posts



within the diocese and he has carried out each one with distinction.

The diocese is really trying to be a diocese venturing in mission and there are all kinds of imaginative ways in which it is trying to live up to what it is to be disciples of Jesus. I have enjoyed the stimulation of taking part in Menter and in trying to have oversight of the diocese during a painful period in its history. I have been met with nothing but warmth and kindness and have appreciated the privilege of having tried to serve you during the last 8 months. I wish the diocese and its new bishop every blessing for the future and I hope that you will give him all the help and support he needs and deserves.

*Barry Cambanis*

## Reader's Day

ST DAVIDS Cathedral was the magnificent setting for the 94th Annual Day of the St Davids Association of Honorary Readers. The day started with the Holy Eucharist at which Archbishop Barry Morgan presided. During the service, three candidates made their declarations in front of the Archbishop, who then admitted them to the office of Reader and presented them with a bible in token of the preaching and teaching ministry to which they were being licensed. In a personal touch, it was each candidate's own incumbent who put their new Reader's scarf over their shoulders. Mr Steve Trayner, already a Reader, was licensed at the service to serve as full time Port Chaplain at Milford Haven for the Missions to Seamen. Mr Trayner, the only Reader in the diocese to be in full time stipendiary ministry, preached and encouraged Readers to explore fully and imaginatively God's calling on them.

After an excellent lunch in the Refectory, the Readers met for a short business meeting in one of the Cathedral's new cloister rooms. They discovered they had preached nearly 900 sermons last year and that was only counting those who had remembered to send their review forms in! The forms showed that Readers were involved in all sorts of ministry across the diocese as well



*Pictured at the Lay Readers Day, from left to right Mr Steven Trayner, Mr Huw Digby, Archbishop Barry Morgan, Mr John Walford, Dean Wyn Evans, Mr Michael Kirby and Warden of Readers, Canon Jo Penberthy*

as their liturgical ministry. They took services in care homes and hospital chapels, they visited in the parish, led confirmation preparation, prayer groups and bible study groups in church and in homes. They led Sunday schools, children's clubs, youth groups, youth services, school assemblies, Alpha groups, and healing services. They were involved with MU, YFC, RDA. They acted as school governors, and chaplains of local sports clubs. They undertook diocesan jobs, and served on diocesan groups. They were involved in Meals on Wheels, community lunches, Cytun, and Pembrokeshire Counselling Service. The majority were involved in their parish

administration and some even did the weekly notice sheets.

The Revd Dennis Wight, the diocesan Vocations Advisor, stressed the importance of the role of Reader in encouraging other lay ministries, as many people who become Readers have begun their ministry in church by reading lessons or leading intercessions.

The day ended with the Warden of Readers saying thank you to the executive committee and all at the Diocesan office for their hard work supporting Reader ministry in the diocese and expressing her gratitude to all the Diocesan Readers for their enthusiasm and hard work.

## Learning to Read

*Glenys Bowen gives a first hand perspective of lay reader training*

TRAINING to be a reader is like learning a musical instrument and then becoming an apprentice musician. First of all there is the realisation, tested by both the Vocations Adviser and the Warden of Readers, that possibly you have gifts and talents which might be useful in lay ministry. This begins the lifelong education into what entering into the reader ministry is. This could be compared to the desire to learn a

musical instrument, having acknowledged that you have the gift of understanding and appreciating music.

In order to read music, there is theory to be learned. This becomes more complex as musical skills deepen and advance. There are two types of theory and language in reader training. First is the academic study of the Bible, doctrine, church history and the skills of leading

worship and preaching. Second is learning the language of the church as an institution – learning what RB means, or Feria, or the DBF and how the diocese operates. The course at Trinity College Carmarthen, with several residential weekends, teaches the first type of theory. Experience in a parish setting at various meetings is where the second type is learned.

Whilst learning the theory equips the readers to communicate the faith to congregations and small groups, it is in taking services that the joy and sense of fulfilment begins, as with performing musical pieces. To begin with it can seem overwhelming –

those passages which you thought you knew by heart take on a new meaning when said in public and there is a feeling of unworthiness that you should be leading a congregation of which you were once part as a person in a pew. The first time a musician takes part in a concert there is the same feeling of nervous anticipation. Then there are the uncomfortable times when the music seems to make little sense however much you practice, and you wonder if the gift is still there. This can happen sometimes when there seem to be large gaps between the theory learned and the reality of taking services and communicating

the word of God, or when there are pressures of time between responsibilities outside the church and the ministry within the church.

However, there is a great deal of joy, as when glorious harmonies reveal themselves in music when everyone is playing their part. Inexperience can lead to mistakes, such as forgetting the Te Deum in Matins or the second set of responses in Evensong, but this is all secondary to the central role of the reader, which is to teach, and to give glory to God whose mercy, truth and love are everlasting.

## Congo or Bust

*by Jennie Annis*

THANKS to the generosity of the people in North Pembrokeshire and the continuing support of the Four Parishes of St Nicholas, Granston, Jordanston and Mathry, Revd Jennie and David Annis successfully took a container of goods to the Diocese of Bukavu in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The shipping company had estimated a period of six weeks to transport the container from Trecwn to Muhumba, via Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, but due to various delays it took three months. Port officials at Dar es Salaam attempted to charge a 'port tax' of 100US\$ a day for six weeks while demanding new paperwork. A freak storm washed

away a vital Tanzanian bridge resulting in a delay of two weeks. The Rwandan border officials were exemplary in their controls but the lorry remained in no-mans-land between Rwanda and the Congo borders for three weeks while the Congolese 'officials' decided what sort of duty had to be paid on the cargo. It was beyond their understanding – the cargo had been donated and had no monetary value! Without a monetary value, they were unable to set a 'tax'. Eventually, thanks to the hard work, determination and persuasive skills of Archdeacon Kalon Dji, David paid the minimum 'tax'. The total cost of transporting the container

was approximately £8,000.

On arrival, David's first task was to appoint a committee of twelve people, which sends regular reports, to oversee the distribution of the goods and to set up a number of new initiatives. The clothing enabled every member of the

Muhumba church to have a complete outfit of clothes. The Mothers' Union used some of the 146 sewing machines to set up a second diocesan sewing school that enables young women, many of whom had been abused during rebel raids, to learn a trade and have a

machine to earn a living. Thanks to the 26 computers plus ancillaries, each diocesan school, diocesan and archdeaconry office now have a computer and a diocesan Cyber Café has been created. The 3,500 books have enlarged the school libraries and a diocesan library has been formed. The diocesan carpentry school benefited from the huge number of tools and many of the parishioners now have gardening tools. But the sight of 1,000 children receiving their first toy made the whole enterprise worthwhile. At the time of writing, the situation in Bukavu is as dire as the current press reports of the rebel atrocities in Goma, which is in the Bukavu Diocese, and the contents of the second container are desperately needed. If anyone wishes to make a donation please contact David Annis 01348 840689.



## Beth Nesaf?

*Eileen Davies, diocesan Rural Life Advisor, asks 'What next?' What will close next in our rural areas after we've realised the closure of so many Post Offices and local shops? Are we doing anything to help as a Church? If you have ideas or are implementing help in your rural parishes she would love to hear from you: eileenllanllwni@yahoo.co.uk*

**B**BETH NESAF? – dyna'r cwestiwn sydd ar wefusau pobl cefn gwlad. Beth nesaf fydd yn cau wrth i'n Swyddfeydd Post ni ar draws ein Hesgobaeth gael ei cau, ac yna Swyddfa Bost symudol un bore neu brynghawn yr wythnos ddreifio i fewn i fan benodedig yn y pentref.

Nid dim ond y Swyddfa Bost sydd yn cau ar draul penderfyniad y Post Brenhinol ond y siop leol hefyd oherwydd mae'r ddau yn mynd law yn llaw gyda'i gilydd. Felly, beth fedrwn wneud fel Eglwys i gynorthwyo? Mae amryw o Eglwys yn cael ei defnyddio fel Swyddfa Bost – lleoliad i'r Post Symudol – hyd yn oed rhai Eglwys yn agor ei drysau fel siop leol – ac yn cynnug cwpaned o dê i'r cwsmeriaid ar ôl iddynt orffen siopa. Mewn rhai ardaloedd mae yna Go-op lysieuol organig yn sicrhau llysiau ffres wedi ei pacio

mewn bocsys a'i cludo i ddrws pobl na fedrent gyrraedd siop yn hwylus. Syniad ymarferol sydd yn cymeryd lle yn rhai Eglwys sydd yn dwyn ynghyd pobl sy'n medru dreifio ag amser i estyn cludiant i'r rhai hynnu sydd ddym yn medru dreifio, ei cludo i'r siop neu archfarchnad ac yna ar ei ffordd adre cwpaned o dê a chacen yn festri yr Eglwys wedi ei baratoi gyda rai o'r aelodau. Ffordd dda o gymdeithasu a chodi ychydig o arian angenrheidiol i'r Eglwys, drwy ofyn am swm bach o arian fel gwerthfawrogiad o'r gefnogaeth.

Os oes gennych unrhyw syniadau neu arferion o fedru cynorthwyo pobl yn eich cynefyn hoffem glywed oddiwrthoch – e-bost [eileenllanllwni@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:eileenllanllwni@yahoo.co.uk)

Gyda'n gilydd fedrwn wneud gwahaniaeth – hwylio bywydau y rhai sydd yn gaeth oherwydd diffig adnoddau yng nghefn gwlad.

## Breathing Space

*Helen Aspden writes about a new initiative at the cathedral*

WHAT is Breathing Space? It is:

- a welcoming place set aside to share with others in quiet reflection, rest and prayer.
- a witness to visitors, pilgrims and local people alike.

One visitor from Worcestershire wrote later to describe Breathing Space as 'a little anchorage'.

I began hosting Breathing Space in the cathedral in Lent 2007, as a newcomer's response to the beauty and special atmosphere of St Davids. Walking around, I had seen the cathedral's many visitors and wondered if they, like me, would welcome an opportunity to share time with others in that atmosphere of stillness.

There was plenty of information available on the cathedral's history and architecture and about the daily services. But how could people be helped to experience informally the spiritual qualities of the place, something of God's peace, especially if they were not used to being in church?

Breathing Space is held fortnightly in the Lady Chapel, Wednesdays 2-3pm. There is now a small team of lay and ordained people who share the vision to offer this space. We find that quietly playing a CD of suitable music draws people in, making it easier to cross the threshold without embarrassment. Copies of a short reading or prayer are provided as a focus, which can be taken away as a memento. There is a guest book

for people to leave contact details and prayer requests as they wish. Some people stay for the whole hour; some for much less. During July and August this year, we met weekly, with up to 40 people joining us.

One family in particular I recall. A couple, very casually dressed in trainers, track bottoms, and t-shirts, a little overweight, just very ordinary people, plus their two teenage girls, similarly attired, rather uncomfortably self-conscious, and apparently not used to such surroundings, came into the Lady Chapel and sat down a couple of rows from the front. The father put his arm around the mother, and with her head on his shoulder she began to weep quietly. The daughters drew close to their mum, the whole family sharing in whatever private grief they were dealing with. From my place near the door, I was able to pray silently for them. Perhaps they met with something of God's comfort there.

For further information, please phone Helen Aspden 01348 831841

"Behold the turtle.  
He only makes  
progress when he  
sticks his neck out."

*James Bryant Conant,  
1893-1978,  
Past President of  
Harvard University*

## Coach House Heritage Centre

**T**HE building of a new visitors' centre in the old coach house, St Dogmael's Abbey has inspired the local community to view again its heritage and Christian roots. At its official opening by First Minister, Rhodri Morgan on 11th September the invited guests and visitors could view a number of rare, early Christian stones situated in the newly refurbished Heritage Centre. These stones originally stood in the precincts of the ancient Tironian Abbey of St Mary of Cemais and bear witness to both the areas antiquity and early Christian influences.

The project began as an initiative to regenerate the community. Following a landslip that threatened the whole parish in 1994, it was felt that a major project would revitalise the confidence of the village. It was decided to develop the vacant 19th century Vicarage Coach House grade 2 listed building, aided partly by Cadw, Lottery Funding and Welsh Assembly Government departments. This would enable the community to



house a permanent centre to preserve local history and encourage lifelong learning and to have a showcase for local produce and skills in a conducive environment.

St Dogmael's Abbey, founded in 1110 AD, boasts extensive remains dating from the 12th to the 16th centuries. The new visitors' centre will enhance people's experience of this unique holy site by encouraging regular pilgrimages for the faithful, a place of interest for the inquisitive, and a welcoming reflection of this delightful village. Hopefully, it will also encourage pilgrims to visit the neighbouring parish church of St Thomas the Apostle, which itself contains many ancient features of interest and, more importantly, the Shrine of Our Lady of Cemais, a

continuation of the original purpose of the abbey in teaching the faith.

Often referred to as 'Pembrokeshire's best kept secret', the abbey is one of Wales' religious jewels and the Church in Wales has been very proud to be involved in the project from its earliest initial plans. With a deep sense of enhancing the natural spirituality of the site, it is hoped that parishes through the diocese and province will see the abbey and church in the light of its original purpose – a place of prayer, proclamation and pilgrimage.

If anyone would like to make enquiries regarding parish visits, quiet days or historical tours you are welcome to contact Canon Dorrien Davies (01239 612030).

## Can none of these people read?

Rhiannon Johnson tells us about her playful side . . .

**A**N African Bishop, visiting St Davids Cathedral before the Lambeth conference, stumbled across one of the Days of Refreshment going on in one of the new cloister rooms. What he saw puzzled him – adults were being told Bible stories using simple toys and images and, after some discussion, were going away to make a creative response to what they had just heard. The bishop, through his interpreter asked "In my country this is what we would do with children, can none of these people read?"

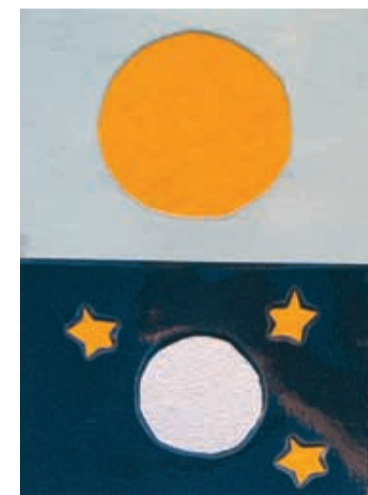
It was a 'Godly Play for Grown Ups' day. Godly Play is essentially a way of nurturing children's faith. It

came to Britain from America in 1999 and this diocese has four trained Godly Play leaders. Although aimed at primary school children, our experience as leaders is that it manages to be both simple enough for children and profound enough for adults. It would be the perfect all-age tool if only we could persuade adults and children to talk as honestly in front of each other as they do when separate.

On that day in the cathedral we started using simple pictures to tell the creation story from Genesis 1. The same pictures were used to give the scientific explanation of creation (yes it can be done). The discussion was hugely creative; we began to use them as images for our own journeys of faith. Very few of us would have done that reading by ourselves.

We also looked at the story of Paul's life. I was struck by the story of a young man so radicalised that he was willing to kill to protect the purity of his ancestral inheritance. Others wanted to explore how dependent each part of the story was on the last and how God can even bring good out of our mistakes.

Then we looked at the story of Jesus. The pictures of crucifixion and resurrection are two sides of the same board – they can not be pulled apart. We started putting the stories

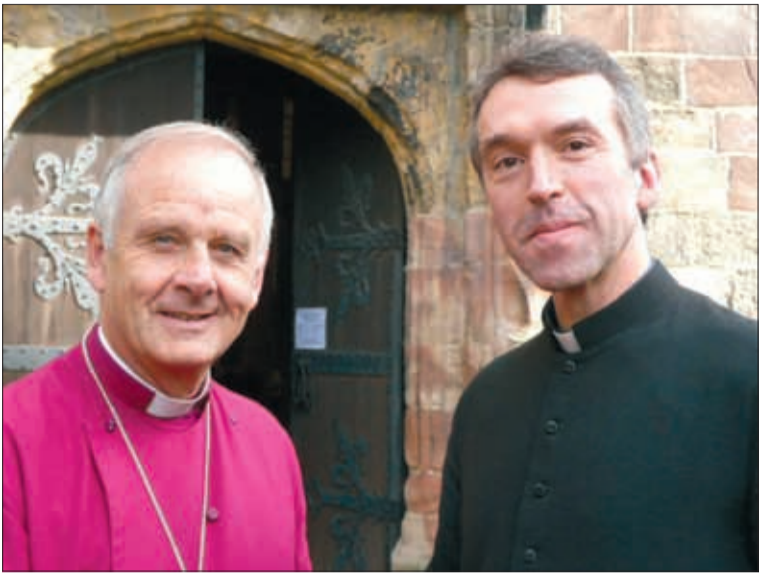


of creation and Paul against this story working towards an understanding of the Trinity – three stories about one God. We finished by bringing all this into a liturgy remembering baptism and how we are made part of the story.

It was a full, rich and emotional journey. I feel that we came closer to each other, closer to our shared traditions and closer to God, even if it did puzzle that bishop.

If you want to know more about Godly Play visit [www.godlyplay.com](http://www.godlyplay.com) or contact me, [rhiannon.johnson@tesco.net](mailto:rhiannon.johnson@tesco.net)

# Bangor Bishop



OUR Archdeacon of Cardigan, the Venerable Andrew John, is the new Bishop of the Diocese of Bangor, ordained on 29 November at Llandaff with our own Bishop Wyn Evans. The appointment follows the much-lamented death of the Rt Rev Anthony Crockett in June, himself a former Archdeacon of Cardigan, who served as Bishop of Bangor from 2004.

He is looking forward to leading the Diocese of Bangor: "I am aware that I have a hard act to follow and that the diocese is still grieving for Bishop Tony. I am very honoured to have been chosen and I hope I will quickly gain the support and the confidence of the people I will serve. Bangor is a very special diocese in a beautiful part of the world and I am very much looking forward to beginning this new chapter in my ministry."

Andy, 44, a fluent Welsh speaker, grew up in Aberystwyth, where he went to Ysgol Penglais. He graduated in Law at the University of Wales, Cardiff, in 1986 and in Theology at the University of Nottingham in 1988. He studied a Diploma in Pastoral Studies in 1989 at St John's

College, Nottingham. He was ordained as a deacon in 1989 and as priest in the Diocese of St Davids in 1990. He was a curate for Cardigan, Y Ferwg and Mwnt from 1989 to 1991, then a curate for Aberystwyth from 1991-1992. He served as vicar in the Rectorial Benefice of Aberystwyth from 1992 to 1999 and then vicar for Henfynyw with Aberaeron & Llanddewi Aberarth from 1999 to 2005 – a parish which expanded in 2005 to include Llanbadarn Trefeglwys. He has been vicar of Pencarreg & Llanycrwys and Archdeacon of Cardigan since 2006. He has recently pioneered the Menter course in Christian evangelism for the diocese.

Andy is married to Caroline, 43, a project manager with Age Concern who is also a Deacon in the Church in Wales, and they have four children aged 11-16. Caroline was ordained as a Deacon when Andy was ordained as a priest in 1990.

As a diocese we shall be sad to lose Andy and his many skills, but our loss is Bangor's gain and our prayers and best wishes go with him.

## A Focus for our prayers – at home and abroad

WHEN you intercede, you plead with one person on behalf of someone else, so 'intercession' is the formal word used for prayers made on behalf of people in need. Many of us lead the intercessions in our services, but I wonder how many of us use our own Diocesan Calendar of Intercessions in our private prayers? The calendar is available to everyone as booklets in our churches, but we would like to remind readers that it can also be downloaded, for printing, via our website at

<http://www.stdavidsdiocese.org.uk/resources/intercessions/>

On entering this page, we are reminded that 'Our ideal is to be a community of prayer in which we hold each other before God', and

here you will find suggestions for the focus of your prayers for every day of the year, not only in our own St Davids Diocese, but also further afield within the Anglican and Porvoo Communion, as well as an inspirational and/or reflective prayer for the week. For example, the suggested focus of our prayers for 7 December (the date Pobl Dewi will be available in parishes) is for the Deanery of St Clears and its Area Dean; in the wider Anglican Communion we are asked to pray for the Diocese of Kolhapur in North India, and, within the Porvoo Communion, the Dioceses of Carlisle and Stavanger, Norway. A prayer by Saint Ambrose provides the thought for the week.

# 80 Years and Going Strong

by Derek Davies

A BIRTHDAY party on a September evening at the Community Hall in Maenclochog was an occasion which Pobl Dewi readers will want to read about. The local community, to whom she is an inspiration, was clear that the "venerable" age she has reached should not pass unmarked, and so we met to celebrate the 80th birthday of Nan Warlow of Parkstone, New Moat.

A "capacity" crowd filled the Hall and a party atmosphere prevailed but it was also much more than just a party; it was a tribute from a community spanning three generations, which has witnessed Nan's untiring contribution to its cultural and religious life. There is scarcely need to add that the work goes on – her enthusiasm and commitment continue to inspire although she, I know, would deny it.

But to express adequately the contributions of those who paid tribute on behalf of all is not easy. They spoke as representatives for so many, across such a long time span, and they also spoke for themselves. So rather than attempt to attribute, I hope those who employed both prose and verse will forgive me if I merely attempt to capture some themes.

Nan was a teacher; she became Deputy Headmistress of Taskers girls' school in Haverfordwest. She herself recalled her school's motto "Wisdom not riches" and just through that brief recollection we had a revealing insight into the compass that guided her in her guidance of



Nan Warlow, former Diocesan President of the Mothers' Union, celebrates her 80th birthday and 25 years as a lay reader in Daugleddau Deanery and Bletherston parish

hundreds of pupils as they passed through her care.

Tributes came from the social glue of the young people of the countryside – the Young Farmers movement. Nan was amongst the founding officers of the Lllysyfran Club and continues to use her artistic talent to support its activities. In a similar context, many recall a nativity scene image being created with a few skilful strokes of a brush – our very own Rolf Harris!

And so perhaps it is in her

spiritual and practical service to the church where Nan's commitment has found its most profound expression; a lay reader and nurturer of small church congregations in difficult circumstances, Diocesan President of the Mothers Union, local pastoral care – there is so much more to say. All these roles combined with scholarship, worldwide travel and a liberal humility reveal a role model that the community cherishes.

Little wonder that we all wanted a party!

## Fiesta Food Fun

HARVEST is always a wonderful celebration in school, full of colour and excitement, but this year at St Aidan's School, Wiston, we felt we would like to do something different. Having read the recent publication from USPG the school agreed to undertake a 'Fiesta' style celebration and raise money for USPG – Anglicans in World Mission. USPG had the theme 'Recipe for Life' for their Harvest and were encouraging people to hold a 'Fiesta' to help raise awareness of their work in Uruguay.

Each class agreed to produce their own version of a 'Recipe for Life' and when presented in church it was wonderful to see their different versions and listen to what they felt made life special. Some classes had each 'ingredient' for life being stirred and mixed whereas others were able to find an ingredient for all the letters of the alphabet! No mean feat!

The children also undertook activities to raise their awareness of Uruguay. All classes found out information about the country, even our 4 year olds! One class learnt all about the football teams in the



Seimon Morris

country and had a mini tournament! Class 3 made piñatas and had the pleasure of filling them with sweets which they later broke and shared! Some children were confident enough to have a conversation in Spanish in front of the congregation in church and it is lovely to hear some children still greeting staff in Spanish in the mornings! With the help of

invaluable parent volunteers the infant department made bread rolls which they then shared with the parents at the harvest tea after the service. Class 4 researched the work of Joaquín Torres-García, a Uruguayan artist whose pictures often consisted of symbols placed within a grid. The whole school then contributed to a mural on his style using images of things that made life special for them. All children presented their work at the service in Wiston Church which was made even more special by the their singing of Latin American style songs to the musical accompaniment of Seimon Morris.

The week's activities were complete when the children and staff came to school dressed in 'Fiesta' style clothing for the church service. It was a colourful sight and an event that the children will remember. Thanks to their generosity the children donated nearly £100 for USPG. – Wendy Macgarvie

"Don't ask yourself what the world needs; ask yourself what makes you come alive. And then go and do that. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive."

– Harold Whitman

# Stunning Stained Glass and the Soldier-Poet

by Elizabeth Haines

ON Friday 26th September, ARCH – Arts in Churches – organised a double event in the Catholic Church in Cardigan. This was an extraordinarily rich and varied evening. The mellow glow of the setting sun showed up Amber Hiscott's stunning stained glass in the shrine and church to its best advantage while the audience was treated to an absorbing discussion between the artist and Father Seamus Cunane, who originally commissioned the windows. The designs are rich in symbolism, and both their meanings and an insight into the technicalities of their creation became clear as they talked. The windows in the west end are symbolic of the sacraments, while the newer flower windows high in the

north wall depict the flowers named after the Virgin Mary in Welsh. The windows in the shrine are illustrative rather than symbolic, showing the history of the shrine, including its arrival by boat from Flanders, with images of pilgrims both medieval and modern. All the glass comprises a wide range of technique which includes painting, etching, sand-blasting.

## Mass in a barn

The film by Derek Shiel David Jones Artist, *Soldier, Poet* was then shown in the Church Hall, introduced by Anne Price-Owen, founder and chair of the David Jones Society. It is a moving account of David Jones' early life and his experiences in the trenches of the Somme; it was there



he saw Mass being celebrated in a barn, an event which led to his later conversion to Roman Catholicism. It then explores his association with the

artist Eric Gill in Ditchling and Capel-y-Ffin.

The film grew out of a Pilgrimage to the battlefields of the Somme

by members of the David Jones Society in 2004, but evolved into a more considered work with contributions by The Archbishop of Canterbury together with poets, artists and friends of Jones.

David Jones' work as both painter and poet is characterised by a wealth of allusion to both Classical antiquity and Welsh culture and he weaves together many strands into rich and complex works. He is now recognised as one of the seminal poets and artists of the 20th century, but despite an ever-growing number of publications on his work, to many people he is unknown. This film, which is planned to appear at the next Cannes Film Festival, seeks to remedy this.

# Charcoal and Putty Rubber

The renowned Pembrokeshire artist Louise Diggle recalls the second Art Workshop she tutored for the Arts in Churches charity ARCH, in the historic church at Gumfreston

THE September weather was glorious and it was wonderful to revisit and explore one of the most fascinating churches in the county. It lies hidden down a track off a busy road and the historical and aesthetic qualities constantly delight the visitor and artist. The south wall of St Laurence had a lovely patina created after years of moss and damp!

Although we were few in number, some great work came out of the two days. After initial drawing exercises and discussion about perspective, participants made

drawings of the church. We noticed that nothing lined up (like the windows) and the walls were at an angle. Drawing buildings always makes one think about how it was constructed and some of the problems the builders faced at the time. It also teaches one not to take anything for granted when drawing!

In the afternoon and on Saturday, some made drawings of the church in ink and watercolour using bamboo pen and paintbrush. We looked at the work of John Piper and the wonderful book on Pembrok-

shire churches by John Knapp Fisher. Others continued to explore different media, such as charcoal and putty rubber. Work was laid out at the end of the final session and we had a final crit. It was eventually displayed at the David Jones exhibition the following week.

It was a wonderful chance to explore a very special church and thanks must go to the Churchwardens who allowed us to use the building and the Revd Anthony Bailey, Chairman of ARCH, for organising the event.



# The First Nowell at 500 watts

FANCY a really rousing carol service? Or how about raising some money for charity by crawling – sorry, trawling – round the pubs with some singers and a bucket? If so, forget your organ or harmonium: import a full symphony orchestra plus a brass band instead. Yes, they will fit into your church, and even your crowded local. All you do is squeeze them into a computer and burn a CD for your PA system or ghetto blaster.

Of course, you have to tell the virtual players what to play first; and that was the aim of the RSCM Digital Music Workshop held in Efailwen, where five musicians from west Wales learned to arrange carols and hymns for a variety of instruments.

After an initial presentation unpacking the mysteries of score-writing programs, sequencers, synthesisers and MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface), the mission which the five participants chose to accept was to complete an



embryonic arrangement of their choice in a way which worked musically and also met the special demands of pre-recorded accompaniments – mainly that everyone should know when to start singing.

Help was at hand from Jonathan Copus, who valiantly refrained from mentioning that the embryos were

extracted from his book and CD of such arrangements, *Carols for Christmas*, available from [www.openstudygroup.org.uk](http://www.openstudygroup.org.uk).

And if your church or local pub suddenly sprouts an invisible brass band this Christmas, you'll know where they came from.

# Drunk on Diapasons

by Jonathan Copus

PICTURE the scene: a group of normally sober church organists staggering from church to church, reeling from a surfeit of salicional, a cornucopia of cornepeans and a glut of gemshorns.

If this prospect fails to set your musical taste-buds tingling, you probably won't want to join the RSCM's *Organ Crawl* in Carmarthen on 28th March. The idea is to sample the delights of six of the county town's notable historic organs in much the same way as beer aficionados are rumoured to journey

from pub to pub, under the expert guidance of Cathedral Assistant Organist Simon Pearce and organ teacher Paul Watkins (the organists, that is, not the drinkers).

There will be a real pub stop for lunch, which is the only element not included in the price of £7. The day begins at Christ Church, Carmarthen at 10.30.

Prior booking is essential, via [simonpearce1@hotmail.com](mailto:simonpearce1@hotmail.com) telephone 01437 720057 or [paul@pawatkfins.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:paul@pawatkfins.fsnet.co.uk) telephone 01267 220359.

# Back from Iraq

Leigh Richardson reflects on his experience as an Army Chaplain in Iraq



I RETURNED from Iraq in mid-February, and with the post-operational tour leave, wasn't due back at work in the Parish until April – the military authorities are quite keen for you to use that month or so to settle back into family and civilian life. After two weeks of being back I was itching to get back into the driving seat, and hassling poor Andrew Johnson who had looked after the parish admirably whilst I was away.

On a simple level, it took a while to get used to the water, having lived on desalinated bottled stuff for nearly four months, and getting used to home cooking – not that the food on the camp was bland, (our Bangladeshi chefs cooked a mean curry... daily!) – but it was regular and samey. Family life was easier to get back into than I'd feared – we had had numerous lectures and briefings on 'coming home', how everything would be different, how 'they' (ie wife and kids) had managed without you for six months and warned you not to assume the role you occupied before you went away, on walking in through the front door. In our case, I think the whole experience had been such a shock to the system, initially at least, we all missed each other so much that it was a joy to be a family together again. Christa coped brilliantly holding down a job and looking after the children and it was only months after coming home I heard of her personal struggles through the long dark winter. It's the families left at home who deserve the medals.

The Parish has been brilliant too, showing interest (in the war stories!) and patience with me in equal and generous measures, whilst not withholding the opportunity of taking the mick at my language – there is an 'army speak' which becomes everyday, because out there, everyone knows what you mean. Back here, it just sounds a little odd and like a caricature of the archetypal army officer. Phrases like, 'crack on' (which means carry on with no reference to me); 'fill your boots' (take what you want or eat all you can!); 'I don't have sight of that' (it's not in my range of knowledge); 'deconflict' (make sure everything runs smoothly) and I'm sure there have been other phrases which have left people looking completely blank and I'm sure there will be more to come.

My last piece for *Pobl Dewi* was written the week before I flew home and I used the phrase "everything has changed, nothing has." I was absolutely right – everything was more or less as I had left it, only I had changed – priorities and emphasis. I know now what is worth fighting for and what is not and have little patience for niff naff and trivia. Life out there was purposeful with one common vision, decisions were life and death decisions, it was serious stuff. It certainly puts life back home into perspective.

Leigh is available to give talks to groups about his experiences in Iraq, tel: 01267 234189

# Hosting a Lambeth Bishop

by Jennie Annis

PRIOR to taking part in the Lambeth Conference, Bishop Bahati and Madame Veneranda of the Diocese of Bukavu in the Democratic Republic of Congo were the houseguests of Revd Jennie and David Annis along with Dr Akin who acted as interpreter. The Bishop had insisted on starting their visit to Britain by going to the Four Parishes of St Nicholas, Granston, Jordanston and Mathry.

The Annis grandchildren introduced the Bishop and his wife to the joys of a trampoline. The Bishop remarked he had never experienced such a joyous form of exercise! Their schedule included visits to the Haverfordwest and Fishguard Farmers Markets to observe the health and safety procedures and practices to enable them to improve the conditions of the market at Muhumba.

On Sunday, they worshipped at Jordanston Church, where the Bishop thanked the congregations for their continuing support of the Parish of Muhumba and the Cathedral of St Peter, before attending St Mary's Church, Fishguard.

Monday's visits included Ponfaen Church, Ffald-y-Brenin Retreat Centre and Penlan Uchaf Gardens in the Gwaun Valley concluding with a reception attended by parishioners of the Four Parishes and Dewisland Deanery clergy. Tuesday's timetable



Bishop Bahati with Revd Jennie Annis

comprised of visits to Pembroke Castle, St Mary's Church, Tenby, and the Dewisland Deanery Synod where they were guest speakers. Bishop Bahati spoke about the highlights and problems of a diocese that is the size of Wales. Madame Veneranda spoke about the work of the Mother's Union.

On Wednesday, Revd Peter Mason gave them a tour of St Davids Cathedral followed by a meeting with the Dean. The party then visited the Saints and Stones annual art competition at St Nicholas village hall. Their visit to Pembrokeshire concluded with lunch for the judges hosted by Mr and Mrs Eastham of Dwrbach before travelling to Oxford where Bishop Bahati, Madame

Veneranda, Dr Akin, Revd and Mr Annis were taking part in the Consultation Conference of the Anglican Church of the Congo and Overseas Partners hosted by CMS.

On Friday, the party travelled all the way to Morpeth, Northumbria where they were the guests of Morpeth All Saints Church of England School before beginning the next stage of their journey at Mitford, Northumbria. On returning to his diocese, the Bishop remarked that his time in Pembrokeshire had been relaxing, exhilarating, informative and educational which demonstrates the stamina that the Bishops require to complete their three month stay in Britain.

## 60 Years of a German Congregation in West Wales

IN the second half of WWII, a great number of labour camps were built in West Wales to house prisoners of war who were then assigned to work on local farms.

Around the same time, Nissen Huts, which housed an American Military Hospital on the site of the West Wales General Hospital, were handed over to the British authorities. This hospital was used to treat sick prisoners of war and was staffed by 17 doctors and nurses who were, themselves, prisoners of war.

Towards the end of the war, all camps and hospitals were inspected to ensure that Human Rights, including the medical, social and religious needs of the prisoners of war, were preserved. In West Wales, this task fell to Dr Hughes Griffiths, and his German wife, who were able to make contact, and form bonds which were to last for many years, with the prisoners who were so far from home.

In 1948, the labour camps and hospital were disbanded, and in the same year the first German Service was held at St Peter's Church, Carmarthen. In the meantime, a fair number of prisoners who had worked on the farms had decided to stay in Wales and, indeed, many married Welsh girls. There was also an influx

church house, but also became a cultural centre and a 'home from home' for the congregation.

However, by 1984, numbers had dwindled and the house was sold. Various venues were used in ensuing years until, today, the congregation meets once a month in the Disabled Drivers' Association Hall in Llanelli.

On 24 August 2008, approximately 70 people attended a 60th anniversary service at St Elli Church. Revd Sian Jones welcomed the German-speaking congregation and Revd Eva Knauf, a Minister of the German Lutheran Church in Wales, gave the address. The balance between English and German, which had been carefully worked out, was greatly appreciated, as was the blessing at the end of the service, which included a Welsh component.

Thanks must go to all those who contributed to this memorable event.





## The MU Reflects

by Ann Gill

As the year draws to its close, it is a good time to reflect on what has taken place. The Mothers' Union has had a fruitful year with many events throughout the diocese at deanery and branch levels.

A training day was held for branch officials and many of the participants went back to their branches and put their new-found knowledge into practice.

The Mothers' Union also took part in the Women of Wales Day at the Botanical Gardens, where the Action and Outreach Unit, the Faith and Policy Unit and the Marketing Unit were all able to inform the public about the work carried out by members of the Society, not only in the diocese but also worldwide. Despite the bad weather, the MU Enterprises Unit was present at the Catalyst event at the showground with a very impressive display.

In May, the archdeaconry festivals were held in Carmarthen, Tenby and Tregaron followed by the days of retreat in Saundersfoot, Felinfoel and Aberaeron during July with the 'Wave of Prayer' held in each branch, emphasising that prayer is the central factor of all the work done by the Society.

During August, members were again in action in the Church tent at the County Show in Haverfordwest, welcoming visitors and serving tea. Many volunteered to help at short notice, as at one time it was not known if there would be a tent at the Show.

While all these public events were taking place, many members were working at home knitting balaclava scarves and socks for the Mission to Seafarers, blankets and small garments for the Special Care Baby Unit at Glangwili Hospital, and teddy bears for the Children's Units at our local hospitals – all part of our ongoing work of the Mothers' Union in the Diocese of St Davids. Branches were also busy with events raising money for the AFIA project when holidays are given to families in need and for overseas projects.

Last but not least, the work done by the Finance and Central Services Unit must not be forgotten, as they work ceaselessly throughout the year making sure everything done in the Diocese runs smoothly and are always on hand to answer any queries that members may have.

So on reflection, it has been a very busy and profitable year. At times, members may feel isolated in their own branches, but they are still part of an on-going and active society whose aim is to help people less fortunate than themselves.

# GSUS goes Live

by Don MacGregor

IMAGINE you are 13 years old at school. For your RE lesson, you are going on board the GSUS Live trailer that you've seen outside the school. After being welcomed and given some 3D glasses, you excitedly enter the darkened trailer to the eerie thud of a heartbeat. On with the 3D glasses and a fast-paced video introduces the three issues – fear, rejection and forgiveness.

The presenter explains that there are three characters, Ben, Kylie and Jack, and that you have to pick one of them to work with at your computer. Ben has an issue with forgiveness, as his brother has stolen £60 from his mum. Kylie is fearful – her best friend is seriously ill and she fears the worst. Jack is feeling rejected by his name-calling friends. You have to pick one of them to work with. They send you an email asking for help. To assist you in choosing how to respond, you look at a Christian video clip, music clip, some verses from the bible, and hear about how some famous people dealt with the issue. Then you choose which message to send back to your person. They send you another email and the story progresses. At the end, the presenter sums up and tells you that Christians believe that God understands our problems as he experienced life and death in Jesus Christ.



The GSUS Live trailer was a fantastic hit in the secondary schools of Pembrokeshire during September and October. Aimed ages 12-14, it still worked with those aged 10 and even 18. The teachers were amazed at how quiet the classes went for 25 minutes as they engaged with the characters on their computers, and the pupils loved it. I overheard comments like

"This is good fun, innit!" On the way out, one lad said to me "That was awesome!" One later comment passed on was from someone feeling rejected and bullied who said, "I feel much more confident now. Next time that happens, I'm going to tell them they are the cowards."

The GSUS Live trailers (there are two) are financed by the John

Laing Trust and are touring secondary schools across the whole of Britain. They help the students to see that Christian teaching can guide a person through life, help with problems, and gets across the message that prayer and turning to God can make a big difference. We hope they will be back in Pembrokeshire again in three years time.

## 'The playing of the merry organ Sweet singing in the choir'

Harri Williams

*The friends of St Davids Cathedral enjoyed another successful festival this year. More than 90 friends came to the event in the cathedral and the foundation of three new choral scholarships was a subject of great jubilation. Dr Roy Massey, one time organist of Hereford Cathedral, delivered a memorable lecture. Refreshments were provided and more than 70 friends stayed to enjoy a meal at the Cathedral Refectory*

YN ystod yr ail benwythnos ym mis Medi, cynhaliwyd Gŵyl Cyfeillion Eglwys Gadeiriol Tyddewi. Fe wnaeth 90 o'r cyfeillion ymgynnull ar gyfer yr Ŵyl. Dechreuodd yr Ŵyl gyda'r cyfarfod blynyddol, cafwyd adroddiadau gan: y Ddeon, y Tra Pharchedig J. Wyn Evans, a'r Ysgrifennydd, Mr Harri Williams. Bu'r adroddiadau yn sôn am y digwyddiadau ym mywyd yr Eglwys Gadeiriol a'r prosiectau niferus sy'n derbyn cynhorthwy ariannol oddi wrth y Gyfeillion. Dathlwyd yn arbennig sefydliad tri ysgoloriaeth gorawl yn ystod y flwyddyn hon.

Y mae nifer o Eglwysi Cadeiriol ar draws Prydain yn cynnig ysgoloriaethau corawl er mwyn rhoi cymorth ychwanegol i'r sefydliad cerddorol. Ar ôl proses o hysbysebu a chyfweliadau,



dyfarnwyd yr ysgoloriaethau i dri dyn ifanc. Y maent yn cael eu talu i ganu yn nhri côr yr Eglwys Gadeiriol, ac hefyd i weithio yn

Swyddfa'r Deondy, y Siop, fel croesawyr yn yr Eglwys Gadeiriol ac fel Llyfrgellwyr yr Adran Gerddorol. Gobeithir eu gweld yn

cymryd rhan ym mywyd yr ysgolion lleol ac yng Ngŵyl Cerddorol yr Eglwys Gadeiriol a chynhalir ym mis Mai hefyd. Fe wnaeth pwyllgor gwaith y Cyfeillion cytuno i sefydlu'r prosiect hwn gan roi dau dreian o'r ysgoloriaeth a ddarparu tŷ ar gyfer yr ysgolion.

Yn ystod y cyfarfod cafwyd darlith arbennig gan Dr Roy Massey, a fu ar un adeg yn Organydd Eglwys Gadeiriol Henffordd. Ar ôl ei ddarlith, bu'r ysgrifennydd yn talu teyrnged i'r Deon am ei waith yn yr Eglwys Gadeiriol yn ystod yr 14 mlynedd diwethaf. Ar ôl y cyfarfod cynhaliwyd te ac yna Gosber a'r Gân a chanodd gôr yr Eglwys Gadeiriol, a oedd yn cynnwys y tri ysgolor newydd. Yna fe wnaeth dros 70 o'r cyfeillion fwynhau cinio arbennig yn Ffreutur yr Eglwys Gadeiriol, a ddarparwyd gan Ms Jo Saunders a'i staff. Ar y ddydd Sul gwelwyd dros 170 o bobl ym mynychu'r Cymun Corawl, lle wnaeth y Deon lywyddu, a'r Ysgrifennydd bregethu.

Yr oedd Ŵyl yn llwyddiannus iawn, a gobeithwyd gweld mwy o Gyfeillion yn ymgynnull y flwyddyn nesaf i ddathlu gweinidogaeth yr Eglwys Gadeiriol, nid yn unig i'r esgobaeth, ond i'r wlad gyfan.

## CMJ Bicentenary

IN 2009, CMJ (The Church's Ministry among Jewish People) celebrates its 200th anniversary. Its early pioneers included such men as William Wilberforce, Charles Simeon and Lord Shaftesbury. Today, there are CMJ societies around the world whose mission is to encourage Jewish people to come to faith in Jesus as their Messiah, to support Jewish believers in serving him and to equip the Church to be involved in this mission.

CMJ UK pursues its mission in Britain, but the main thrust of CMJ's work is in Israel. The focal point there is Christ Church located in the Old City of Jerusalem close to the Jaffa Gate. Christ Church, consecrated in 1849, is the oldest Protestant church in the Holy Land. The church hosts several congregations, including one of Messianic Jews (Jews who believe in Jesus).

Besides the church, the Christ Church Centre also contains a guest house, a café, a Messianic bookstore and a heritage centre. Each year thousands of Israelis visit Christ Church because of its historical significance. They are eager to know its history and the faith of today's believers. The Centre also provides the base for Shores Tours which offers study tours and prayer tours of the Holy Land.

CMJ Israel also supports *The Anglican International School, Jerusalem*, which also hosts a Messianic congregation and whose site contains a heritage centre and a Messianic school;



*The Sunshine School*, an English language pre-school in East Jerusalem, serving especially the local Arab and international population; *Beit Bracha*, a retreat centre in hills overlooking the Sea of Galilee, which welcomes Jewish and Arab people from Israel and visitors from around the world; *Beit Immanuel Messianic Congregation and Guest House*, adjacent

to the ancient port of Jaffa.

David Foster, who is also a licensed Reader for the Diocese of St Davids, has recently been appointed a representative of CMJ UK. He would be happy to talk about the work of the society at Sunday services or mid-week meetings. He can be contacted on 01267 243558 or at [davidmfoster@btinternet.com](mailto:davidmfoster@btinternet.com).

## Away from it all?

by Alun Evans

EACH November the Bishop and his senior staff meet away from Abergwili and the Diocese for an overnight meeting to consider matters of diocesan strategy and policy in a more sustained way than is possible at our monthly staff meetings. For the last four years we have met at St Joseph's Convent, Llantarnam, on the outskirts of Cwmbran.

A leading item on the agenda each year is a review of our strategy for the deployment of a sustainable pattern of ministry. You will remember that, having agreed that the figure of 84 stipendiary priests as in the Provincial allocation would be too few to provide an effective ministry, we opted as a Diocese for a figure of 100 stipendiary parish clerics and this remains our goal. It is an uneven process, sometimes with provisional arrangements made until the pieces come together.

Two other agenda items relate to the provision of ministry. Contrary to what may seem to be case, a reduction in clergy numbers does not mean that we should give up on



fostering vocations to the ordained ministry. In fact the opposite is true. Analysis by the Revd Stephen Adams has shown that unless we continue to encourage vocations for ordinations, retirements and other factors mean that we shall be well below even the figure of 84 stipendiary clerics by 2013. He estimates that we need at least six ordinations

each year just to reach our target figure.

The second related item concerns lay ministry. The stipendiary ministry needs to be set in the context of ministry as a whole, including non-stipendiary ministry and lay ministry, as well as exploring the potential of local ordained ministry. The idea of collaborative

## September 2008 Governing Body

by Revd Fr Paul Mackness

THE autumn meeting of the Governing Body (GB) sat over 17th-18th September at the University of Wales, Lampeter.

The Archbishop, Dr Barry Morgan used his opening address to report on some of the events surrounding the Lambeth Conference in particular the opportunity to talk and reflect about the things that Anglicans had in common and also to look at the richness and breadth of the Communion. He also reflected on some of the difficulties facing the Anglican Communion at this time in particular the whole issue of human sexuality, the proposed Covenant and the impact of GAFCON.

Later in the business of the GB, all of the Welsh Bishops who attended Lambeth gave their own reflections of the event and what had particularly touched them about it. This was very well received by the GB as a whole.

There was as always a large agenda but certain things stood out more in the business of the GB than others.

The first was the report of the Working Group on the Representation of Women in the Church in Wales. This proved to be quite controversial as the report recommended instituting targets for lay (50%) and clerical (30%) representation of women on all committees of the Dioceses, Governing Body and Representative Body by 2013.

There was a considerable

amount of debate over the report but the motion put forward by the Working Group was carried.

The Bench of Bishops also gave a statement regarding the pastoral care of those who in conscience cannot accept the ordination of women to the priesthood.

Following the retirement of Bishop David Thomas, the Provincial Assistant Bishop earlier in the year, the Bench had decided not to appoint a successor. Whilst acknowledging and paying tribute all that Bishop David had done in his ministry over the last 12 years, the Bench felt that it was now time to move to a different approach and pledged continual pastoral care for those opposed to the ordination of women, reaffirming the role of the Diocesan Bishop as the focus of unity for each Diocese.

The Church in Wales Educational Review Group presented an interim report of its work and some of the emerging recommendations. This mammoth piece of work is looking at all aspect of the Church's contribution to the field of education "Serving Christ through the provision of education in Wales". The report was well received and all parishes were urged to contribute to the ongoing process.

Full details of the September 2008 Governing Body can be found on the Provincial Website, or in the *Highlights Magazine* (download from the website or hardcopy circulated to parishes).

ministry was considered in beginning the restructuring of provision for training for lay ministry, providing a valuable foundation on which to build towards a varied pattern of lay ministries as an integral part of the Church's mission.

Many other items filled the agenda. We considered a diocesan strategy for clergy sabbaticals, so that they come to be recognised as a natural and important part of a priest's on-going ministerial development. We reviewed the excellent work being done by the Standing Committee group working on streamlining and updating the Diocesan Constitution.

We began our residential recalling and reaffirming our commitment to *Venturing in Mission*, taking stock of where we are three years after its launch. Recognising that mission must be local, and wishing to affirm the mission of the church in our parishes, our focus for this coming year will be on the first of the ViM themes – "a Catholic Church with a local focus."

Our time at Llantarnam was inspiring and encouraging. My hope and prayer is that as a team we can share that encouragement – and challenge – with you in the parishes as we venture on under Bishop Wyn's leadership.

## Tourism Training

Are visitors able to appreciate to the full the story of faith represented in your church building? How can your church improve its ministry to visitors? Come to one of the training days from the Diocesan Tourism Group. March 4th in Fishguard, March 26 in St Dogmael's. Ceredigion date to be arranged. Enquiries about these days or other tourism matters to Jeremy Martineau on 01348 874886 or [jfmartineau@onetel.net](mailto:jfmartineau@onetel.net).

# In Grateful Memory of George Noakes

*Bishop of St Davids 1982-1991; Archbishop of Wales 1987-1991*

ARCHBISHOP George Noakes was a modest person, who gained the respect of all who knew him – in every office he graced. He was above all else the shepherd, his ministry pastoral in every way. People mattered. We first met in 1947 at the University in Aberystwyth as two ex-Servicemen – he returning from active service with the Royal Air Force to complete his degree course, and I arriving to begin my academic career after serving with the Royal Navy. Living as he did in the nearby Tregaron area, we did not see much of each other except at weekends when we helped out with services at St Mair and St Anne, Penparcau. George was proving an able preacher in both languages, a gift which enhanced his ministry in different parts of Wales. In bilingual situations he would move easily from one language to the other without any tedious repetitions or anyone losing the train of his thoughts and superb teaching ability.

Following our time at Aberystwyth, George completed his training at Wycliffe Hall in Oxford, and we were priested in the same year, he to start at Lampeter and I at Fishguard, and thereafter our paths were to cross from time to time. For instance, when

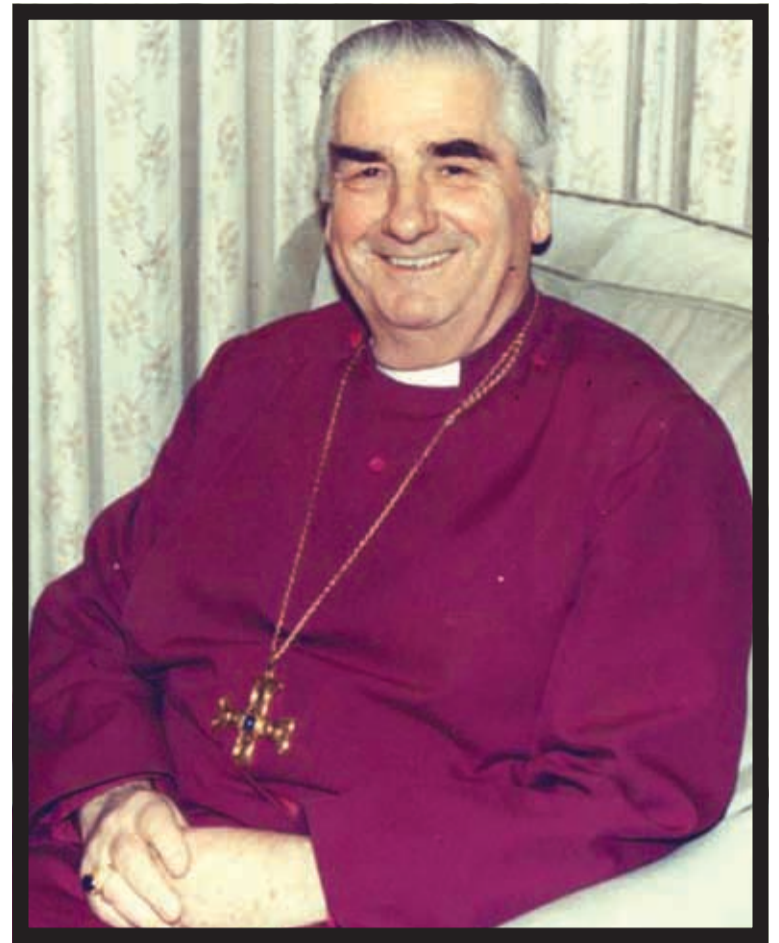
George moved to the Eglwyswrw group, I was serving the parishes of Uzmaston and Slebech, meeting up occasionally and each being involved with our local Young Farmers' clubs. His next move was to his native patch as vicar of Tregaron, and after several years there as a devoted parish priest, he made the decisive move to Dewi Sant, the Welsh Church in Cardiff. His natural pastoral gifts enabled him to serve quietly and effectively an eclectic congregation, and during this time he made lasting contacts with the Welsh media when TV was becoming a growing influence on society, and matters bilingual and ecumenical becoming more important. After nine years he was appointed Rector of the newly formed Rectorial Benefice of Aberystwyth, and gave firm leadership to the community in this critical time, making valuable contacts with the growing University. This was later recognised when he was granted the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity. Later, he became Archdeacon of Cardigan, a position which gave him greater administration experience.

In 1982, he was consecrated Bishop of St. Davids and served as our bishop for nine years, his pastoral

gifts helping us to become more of a family and having a practical concern for his clergy and their families. So it came as no surprise when in 1987 he was elected archbishop, and with his high sense of duty, he reluctantly accepted. George became archbishop at a time when the province and the whole Anglican Communion were undergoing changes, which involved George, as primate, in overseas meetings and conferences, while as archbishop he was continually called on to be part of various commitments throughout Wales.

Becoming more aware of the increasing pressures on an archbishop, the province decided at this time that the primate should have an assistant to help relieve the strains, and I had the great honour of being the first so appointed. He often felt that he was neglecting his diocese but this was never true; he held the reins firmly and continued to exercise wise leadership. But the burdens of office took their toll, affecting his health, and reluctantly he resigned as bishop and archbishop – a great loss to diocese and province.

Fortunately, his health improved with the lessening of the strains, enabling him to fulfil an active retirement helping out in neigh-



bouring parishes and conducting retreats and quiet days with much spiritual depth. His proximity to Carmarthen and later residence there gave him the pleasure of visits from old friends, both cleric and lay, and they were grateful for the fellowship

and guidance received. We thank God for the life and ministry of Bishop George from whom so many benefited and remain grateful to one who truly fulfilled his calling under God. – *Bishop Ivor*

## Er Parchus Gof am George Noakes

*Esgob Tyddewi 1982-1991, Archesgob Cymru 1987-1991*

FEL nifer o'i gyfoeswyr, bu George yn yr Awyrlu yn ystod y rhyfel. Enillodd radd o Goleg Aberystwyth cyn symud i orffen ei astudiaethau academaidd yn Rhydychen. Cychwynnodd ar ei weinidogaeth yn Llanbedd o dan arweiniad T. E. Jenkins, offeiriad plwyf profiadol a benodwyd yn Ddeon Tyddewi. Yn y cyfnod hwn, bu George yn ddarlithydd yng Ngholeg Llanbedd a oedd yn dal i fod yn goleg eglwysig bryd hynny. Yn wir, fe'i siomwyd yn fawr pan gollodd y coleg hwnnw ei statws

eglwysig yn ystod ei esgobaeth yntau.

Gwasanaethodd hefyd ym mhlwyfi gru 'p Eglwyswrw cyn symud yn ôl i'w gynefin ei hun yn Nhregaron. Fel bachgen o gefn gwlad, roedd George yn medru agosáu at ei blwyfolion a llwyddodd i fod yn fugail da, rhinwedd a dyfodd i fod yn nodweddiadol o'i weinidogaeth. Yn y chwedegau, derbyniodd fywoliaeth Eglwys Dewi Sant, Caerdydd. Ni fynodd George fod yn flaenllaw erioed, ond tyfodd i

fod felly oherwydd ei gysylltiadau yn y brifddinas. Cyflawnodd ei ddyletswydd plwyfol yn ffyddlon tra'n cydweithio â chynrychiolwyr yr enwadau eraill mewn cyfnod pan oedd agweddau eciwmenaidd yn parhau i ddatblygu. Manteisiodd hefyd ar y cyfle i gymryd rhan yn BBC Cymru pan oedd dylanwad y teledu yn cryfhau'n gyflym.

Symudodd i wasanaethu ym mhlwyf Aberystwyth. Yma, daeth ei ddoniau arbennig yn fwy amlwg drwy ei ffyrdd doeth a gweithgar a chyflawnodd ei swydd gydag

urddas. Bryd hynny, roedd y Corff Llywodraethol yn cyfarfod ddwywaith y flwyddyn yn y dref. Chwaraeodd George rhan blaenllaw ynddo ac enillodd barch bobl y dalaith. Bu ei ddylanwad ar gylch Aberystwyth yn aruthrol ac ysbrydolodd sawl un o fyfyrwyr y Coleg i feddwl yn ddwys am y posibilrwydd o gynnig eu hunain i'r weinidogaeth. Penodwyd ef yn Archddiacon Ceredigion ac, unwaith eto, gwelwyd dawn yn ei ofal am yr offeiriad a'u teuluoedd.

Nid rhyfedd felly i George gael ei ethol yn esgob Tyddewi yn 1982, etholiad a groesawyd gan bawb. Ddechreuodd ei weinidogaeth esgobol gyda chenhadaeth ar faes

Y Strade. Daeth yn adnabyddus hefyd oherwydd ei gof eithriadol – cofia ef bob manylyn am bawb a fu fyth yn ei gwmni.

Maes o law, penodwyd ef yn Archesgob Cymru. Yn ystod y cyfnod hwn, bu baich y galwadau arno yn amlhau yn ei esgobaeth ac yn y dalaith ac effeithiodd hyn ar ei iechyd yn y pen draw. Bu'n rhaid iddo ymddeol ond parodd i fod yn arweinydd ysbrydol i nifer. Mawr yw ein diolch a'n ddyled iddo am ei weinidogaeth ddisglair a dylanwadol. Cofiwn hefyd am ei weddw, Jean, a fu'n wraig ffyddlon a chefnogol iddo bob amser a diolchwn i Dduw amdanynt.

+*Esgob Ivor*

## Anthony Crockett

WHEN the Right Revd Anthony Crockett was enthroned in Bangor Cathedral 18 September 2004, he brought from the Archdeaconry of Carmarthen to his new Diocese a profound theology of clergy and laity as pilgrim people. In his early days as Bishop of Bangor, he walked with people and talked with people. He won their hearts and began to shape their minds. For him, the pilgrim people of God embraced rich diversity, but eschewed division.

Young and old could walk comfortably alongside their Bishop, as could conservatives and liberals, Catholics and evangelicals, Welsh-speakers and English-speakers. The vision of the Church of God in the

Diocese as a pilgrim people reached its goal, on Saturday 21 June (only a week before Bishop Anthony died), when clergy and laity from across the Diocese stepped out in the rain on the Diocesan Pilgrimage. Sadness that Bishop Anthony had not been well enough to fulfil his vision to be there in person as the symbol of unity in the Diocese was qualified by the inspirational address that he had prepared and that Canon Andrew Jones so ably presented.

Bishop Anthony brought to the Diocese of Bangor the benefits of his academic training in classics from King's College London and his ministerial training at St Michael's College Llandaff. After being made



deacon on 1971, he served in parish ministry in The Dioceses of Llandaff and St Davids, before his formative experience of serving as Secretary for the Board of Ministry between

1991 and 1999. In 1999 he was appointed Archdeacon of Carmarthen and Vicar of Cynwil Elfed and Newchurch in the Diocese of St Davids. He was consecrated bishop 16 July 2004 at Llandaff Cathedral.

All of Bishop Anthony's friends will have their own very special memories of his intellectual rigour, his liturgical sense, and his pastoral heart. The memory that takes precedence for me is when he came to visit my mother in her home last November, a few days after she had returned from hospital. He admired her new Zimmer frame and inspired her to use it to good effect.

Throughout his own last year, Bishop Anthony embraced his illness with courage, fortitude and hopefulness, and very much remained Bishop of his Diocese to

the end. His example has been, and will continue to be, an inspiration for many, to trust God and to serve God in sickness as in health.

The Church in Wales will continue to mourn the untimely death of a gifted Bishop, and it will pray for and support his widow Caroline, the children and family. To be true to Bishop Anthony's vision, the pilgrim people of God within the Diocese of Bangor must continue to walk in the path towards unity into which Anthony so ably led them, and to honour his memory by giving their support to the Bishop elected to follow him.

*Leslie J. Francis  
Canon Theologian,  
Bangor Cathedral*



The archdeacon of St Davids congratulates George Thorne, a sidesman at Steynton church, on his receipt of the highest award in the world of beef farming. George's cattle have just won the prize of best Hereford herd in the UK. He and the family will feature in the S4C programme *Ffermio* on December 15th.

## A Challenge to Microsoft

by Dewi Roberts

THE Sydney Diocese of the Anglican Church has decided to cut the Microsoft Office 'umbilical cord' by moving to 'OpenOffice' – a free piece of software that does virtually everything that Microsoft Office does.

Buying a copy of Microsoft Office is expensive, and if you happen to possess more than one computer you would have to buy the Microsoft Office license for each computer. With OpenOffice you can download the English or bilingual version for free and install it on as many computers as you want, at a total cost of zero pounds. Files can all be saved in Microsoft .doc format so that other readers can still read your files on their computers. Many organizations in countries all around the world are adopting open formats and it is

rapidly becoming an international standard.

You might ask why is OpenOffice not more widely known. Its simple – shops won't sell something that costs £0. There is no profit in it for them. If it is free, it must be rubbish then? No, not at all – over many years there have been computer programmers perfecting this word processing format. Even IBM has joined the open-source community to collaborate on the development of OpenOffice.org software.

Should we, as a Church, be tied to one company's product? And should we buy something for a high price when an equally good alternative is available for free? Break the 'Microsoft' umbilical cord. Set yourself free, choose 'Open Office'!

More about Open Office at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenOffice.org>  
Download it at [www.openoffice.org/](http://www.openoffice.org/)



The Revd Matthew Dobbs was newly licensed as Team Vicar in Monkton Rectorial Benefice at St David's Church, Hundleton on 8th October. Matthew (left) is seen here with the Revd. Martin Cox, Rector

# Gwasanaeth Ieuencid: Addoliad Amlgyfrwng

by Dyfrig Lloyd

A youth service for the archdeaconry of Ceredigion, arranged by the Diocesan Youth Team, was held at St Peter's Church in Lampeter this September. Great numbers of young people and their families came to the event. During a Communion service a screen and projector were used to incorporate elements of modern culture into the liturgy. The service attempted to grapple with the question that Jesus asked his disciples: 'But who do you say I am?' and the response of Peter 'You are Christ, the Son of the living God'. (Mathew 16: 15-16). The event was a great success and was a good opportunity for the young people of the archdeaconry to get to know each other. Similar events are being planned for the future, so keep a look out for further details.

NÔL yn mis Medi, yn eglwys St Pedr, Llamedd, cynhaliwyd Gwasanaeth Ieuencid ar gyfer Archddiaconiaeth Ceredigion gan Dîm Ieuencid yr Esgobaeth. Bwriad y gwasanaeth oedd denu ieuencid ein heglwys ynghyd mewn un lleoliad i addoli ac i gymdeithasu ar y cyd. Dyma'r tro cyntaf i rywbeth o'r fath gael ei gynnal ar lefel arddiaconiaethol, ac am hynny yr oedd llawer o bryder gennym fel y Tîm Ieuencid ynglyn â'r niferoedd a fuasai'n mynychu, ond ni chawsom siom. Ar noson braf ym mis Medi, daeth tyrfa o bobl ifanc, rhieni ac aelodau eglwys i'r cylch ynghyd; o bob oedran ac o wahanol ardaloedd yn yr archddiaconiaeth. Er bod y mwyafrif yno yn anghyfarwydd ag eglwys St Pedr, a heb fod yn adnabod ei gilydd, eto, yr oedd naws deuluol ac awyrgylch hwylus a chyfroes yn perthyn i'r digwyddiad.

Gwasanaeth Cymun Bendigaid ydoedd, ond braidd yn wahanol i'r arfer, gan iddo gael ei gynllunio gyda phobl ifanc mewn golwg. Trwy ddefnyddio sgrîn a thafunydd yr oeddem yn medru cyfuno agweddau o ddwylliant ieuencid ein dydd, ei ddelweddau a'i gerddoriaeth a'u gwneud yn rhan annatod o'r addoliad. Y syniad tu ôl i hyn oedd gwneud dolen gyswllt rhwng bywyd pob dydd a'n bywydau o ffydd, ac i gynorthwyo'r ieuencid i weld nad rhywbeth i'r cenhedlaethau a fu yw Cristnogaeth, ond rywbeth sy'n berthnasol i'w bywydau, ac sydd â rhywbeth allweddol i gynnig i fywyd cyfoes. Datblygwyd y gwasanaeth o amgylch y cwestiwn a ofynnodd Iesu i'w ddisgyblion; "Pwy meddwch chi ydwyf fi?", ac ymateb Pedr, "Ti yw'r Meseia, Mab y Duw byw." (Mathew 16: 15-16). Yr oedd yr holl wasanaeth

yn ymchwiliad ac esboniad o'r cwestiwn hwn, ac wrth gwrs yr her sydd yn glwm ag ef.

Ar ôl y gwasanaeth cafwyd amser i gymdeithasu â'n gilydd drwy rannu lluniaeth ysgafn. Cyfle i'r Tîm Ieuencid gwrrdd â phobl ifanc yr Archddiaconiaeth, a hefyd iddynt hwy gyfarfod a dod i adnabod ei gilydd. Yn sgîl llwyddiant y gwasanaeth hwn, gobeithir cynnal rywbeth tebyg yn y dyfodol agos! Cadwch eich llygaid ar agor am fanylion!

Hoffwn fanteisio ar y cyfle i ddiolch i bawb am eu cefnogaeth i'r fenter hon; i bawb a gefnogodd trwy fynychu'r gwasanaeth, i eglwys St Pedr am gael ddefnyddio'r eglwys; i aelodau'r Clwb Nos Lun am ddarparu'r lluniaeth, ac i aelodau Tîm Ieuencid yr Esgobaeth am eu cefnogaeth a'u cymorth ymarferol ar yr ochr dechnolegol.

## Half a Bicentenary Celebration

by John Davies

IN October this year, we celebrated the Bicentenary of our Parish Church, St Katherine & St Peter in Milford Haven – or rather half of it, for the church was doubled in size in 1907.

Saint Katharine's was consecrated in October 1808 on the instructions of Charles Francis Greville, who insisted that the church should occupy an important position in his "New town" of Milford Haven. The extended church still occupies this important position, not only physically next to the Town Hall, but also in the life of the whole of Milford. Historically linked with the fishing industry, with all its successes and sorrows, St Katharine's has for forty years been linked with the pastoral ministry of the Mission to Seafarers, originally through the parish clergy, now with a full time Lay Chaplain, based on the parish church.

The church and parish are firmly rooted in the Anglican tradition that the parish priest holds the Cure of Souls for the whole of his parish,

and over the years the clergy serving the parish have made every effort to serve the wider community, even if not within the four walls of St Katharine's. So there is a strong historic link with the civic authority and, over forty years and more, an exciting partnership has been formed in the schools, with both a pastoral and teaching ministry ranging from three years of age to eighteen.

The PCC some years ago resolved to allow the Parish Hall to be used free of charge by voluntary and charitable organisations locally, as part of the parish's ministry to the town. The Hall is so well used by adult and youth groups, that it can be a problem to make a booking even for church events!

Celebrating our Bicentenary does not mean that the people of the parish are content with celebrating the history of the church building, even though it has a particular importance as a rare Welsh Georgian church. As Archbishop Barry reminded us in his address at the Bicentenary Mass, it is not the church that matters so much as the people of the Church, who go out from the building after worship to live the Gospel in their lives and to bring it to others.

At present, we are going on with the long-needed restoration of the tower, a Milford landmark on land and sea. In doing this, we hope and pray that we are building for the future of Christ's Church, in more ways than one!

When you were born, you cried and the world rejoiced. Live your life so that when you die, the world cries and you rejoice.

– Cherokee Expression

# The Lampeter Challenge 2008 (or the St Davids Diocesan Conference!)

by Val Wakeman

**P**ARISH representatives from all over the diocese were delighted to welcome the Very Rev. Wyn Evans as Bishop elect at the diocesan conference at Lampeter University on October 4th. As Dean he took the chair and during the afternoon ably steered the 'official' part of the proceedings through in just 20 minutes (reports from the various committees having been circulated in advance), leaving the major part of the day to consider vocations and the future of the church.

The Ven Dr John Holdsworth set the scene with his Bible study on 1 Peter 2 1-10 when he challenged us to think outside the box. He also introduced the new Church in Wales DVD entitled Renewable Energy which shows various Church in Wales congregations exploring different expressions of church, with enthusiasm, energy and faith that God is leading them in these areas. Copies of the DVD have been given to all Area Deans, so if you have not yet seen it, do ask for a copy. It is both exciting and challenging.

We were introduced to lay people involved in various aspects of ministry in the diocese:



**Lay readers** – this was described as a fulfilling and rewarding job, even though those who spoke had been thrown in at the deep end following their licensing, and they

were looking forward to expanding their ministry even further. A vicar said how good he found it to have someone with whom he could prayerfully share the work in his parishes.



**Worship Leaders** – a vital role supporting the clergy, leading morning and evening prayer in many places. If you like to go to a 'traditional' Evensong you could visit Llys y Fran church where this is ably led by someone with a tremendous sense of humour.

**Intercessors** – leading intercessions was described as a privilege and the speaker encouraged others to consider offering themselves to do this in their own churches.

**Church Army** – Sister Wendy, a very modern, vivacious, and able lady who ministers to the young people involved in the 'club scene' in Cardiff, showed a presentation of

the work she initiated there, certainly 'outside the box' and one that is very needed amongst those who are vulnerable, lonely and often desperate.

The time ended with a service which invited everyone to renew their baptismal vows in a very moving way. Everything we had seen or heard was designed to make us think about the way we go about things ourselves. The challenge to us all is to consider what God wants in very changing times, both in our churches and for us as individuals.

## Ymadawriad Y Barch, Suzy Bale

by Eluned Rees

*Members at St Michael's Church, All Saints Ammanford and St David's Church, Betws bade farewell to their Curate, the Reverend Suzy Bale. The Venerable Alun Evans paid tribute to her ministry and Canon Dewi Thomas offered a word of thanks on behalf of the parish. Although Suzy is a native of Bath, she has endeavoured to become fluent in the Welsh Language in order to preside and preach at Welsh Language services*

**N**OS Iau, Medi 25ain, daeth lluo aelodau Eglwys San Mihangel, yr Holl Saint Rhydaman a Dewi Sant, y Betws at ei gilydd yn Neuadd yr Eglwys, Rhydaman er mwyn ffarwelio â'r Barchedig Suzy Bale a fu'n Gurad yno ers dwy flynedd.

Talwyd teyrnged iddi gan Archddiacon Caerfyrddin, yr Hybarch Alun Evans a chan y Canon Dewi Thomas ar ran y plwyf. Dywedwyd iddi fod yn ysbrydoliaeth yn ei ffordd ddymunol o ddelio â phobl ac oherwydd ei brwdfrydedd yn ystod holl weithgareddau'r Eglwys. Talwyd teyrnged arbennig iddi, a hithau'n frodor o Gaerfaddon, am dysgu Cymraeg



er mwyn arwain gwasanaethau a phregethu yn yr iaith honno.

Cyflwynwyd sic iddi a chafwyd bwffe a drefnwyd gan wragedd y plwyf, cyn dymuno'n dda iddi ym mhlwyf Llanbedr Pont Steffan. Mawr yw ein colled ni yma.



**A** VISIT to Syria will feature in a pilgrimage being planned from the archdeaconry of St Davids. Highlights of the visit to Damascus will include seeing the Street called Straight, mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, and a service at the chapel of Ananias. Apart from visiting Syria, pilgrims will spend ten days travelling through the Kingdom of Jordan, and doing an

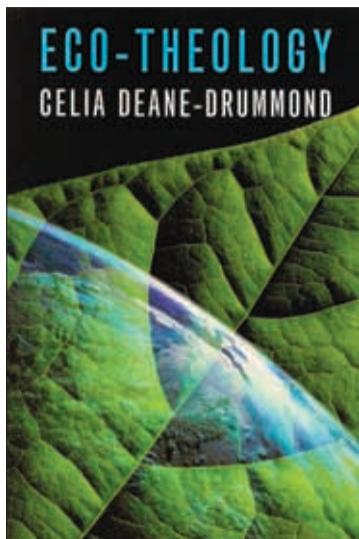
Exodus in reverse by crossing the Red Sea to reach Mount Sinai. The tour will be led by the archdeacon, and follows a successful archdeaconry pilgrimage to other parts of the Holy Lands two years ago. It has been timed to coincide largely with the October half term in 2009. Archdeacon John Holdsworth described this as "a Rolls-Royce programme." Accommodation is in

top class hotels, he said. All meals are included in the price. Flights are day-time with scheduled airlines. A tremendous variety of historic, cultural and social aspects of life in Old and New Testament times and today are included. There are a very few places still available.

Enquiries should be addressed to the archdeacon:

[jh@steynton.org.uk](mailto:jh@steynton.org.uk)

## Reviews



### Eco-Theology by Celia Deane-Drummond DLT 2008

ST DAVIDS is a Fair Trade Diocese but many people think that it has yet to become sufficiently concerned about living sustainably. Some churches may be involved in reducing their carbon footprint but it is likely that few congregations hear much from the pulpit about ecology.

This book will help stir preachers and teachers, for its bibliography alone is substantial, and the reader is treated to a feast of references. The

chapters draw in writers from different cultures. The author is at her strongest in relating the Bible to ecological thinking and practice.

As a university teacher much of her material has had its first airing in that academic setting, to which many may find it hard to relate. Each chapter has a conclusion, which is effectively a useful summary of what has gone before, and this may tempt some to skip the hard work and just read these conclusions. But that would be to miss the richness of the valuable material coming from this Professor of Theology and Biological Sciences. I found it important to read the notes while reading the main text more than in most other books. The reader is presented with some other strands in contemporary life related to the theme of ecology, such as life in the Spirit, feminism, and concern about the end of the world.

This is a book the church council should buy for the clergy and ask them to help the wider church understand the positive contribution Christian thinking and practice can make to a better life for all God's creation in the future.

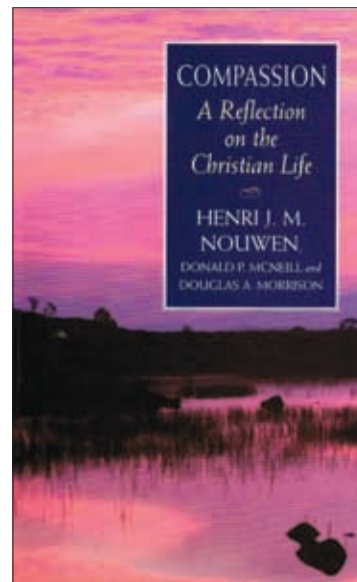
Jeremy Martineau  
Director of the Centre for  
Studies in Rural Ministry

### Compassion – A Reflection on the Christian Life Henri Nouwen, Donald McNeill & Douglas Morrison, DLT 2008 ISBN 13978 02325 27414

IN the midst of bank crises, financial meltdown and crumbling moral standards, this book tackles the question of what it means to be compassionate in a self-centred, power-hungry world. It looks at this central issue in our journey – how to live compassionately when there is so much suffering, so much injustice, and so many calls on our time and finances.

Henri Nouwen died in 1996, and the book is a revision by the two remaining authors of the original classic of the spiritual life, first published in 1982, but it is as fresh and relevant as ever. It explores themes of the compassionate God revealed to us in Christ, and the implications of that for us as disciples, through prayer and action.

It has many helpful linguistic



insights, such as the Greek verb for 'to be moved with compassion' coming from the same word as the 'guts'. The Hebrew word comes from 'womb'. Hence "compassion is such a deep, central and powerful emotion in Jesus that it can only be described as a movement of the womb of God. There, all the divine

gentleness and tenderness lies hidden."

The authors touch on the issue of compassion fatigue, seeing that it can lead to 'psychic numbness and hostility', and, despite it being written over 25 years ago, it has an immediate relevance as we see daily every detail of the latest disaster or conflict. However, compassion is not a response to suffering in their view, but to the unconditional love of God. They examine 'displacement' and how moving out of our comfort zones can open us to others and lead to compassion. Their section on prayer and action is centred in the idea of patience, which they see as the discipline of compassion, leading to prayer and action.

I found this a very helpful and deeply spiritual book. The three teachers of pastoral theology come across in an accessible and lively style, with a depth on insight into the compassionate heart of God that is much needed in the difficult world in which we live today.

– Don MacGregor

## Advent Meditation

IN the Carmarthenshire hills the Sunday before Christmas is *Sul Du Bach* ('Little Black Sunday'). "*Sul Du Bach – a wedyn bydd y dydd yn ymestyn cam ceiliog cyn y Nadolig*" ("Little Black Sunday – and then the day will stretch out by a cockerel's footstep before Christmas"), my churchwarden in Abergorlech used to remark. In town the Christmas lights are switched on weeks before the festival, but having spent so much of my ministry in the depths of the countryside, for me the Advent season is still very much a time of waiting for the light, which is itself a symbol of Christ's coming into the world.

An old woman, brought up in Llanddewibrefi, once described an early Christmas memory to me. She would get up for the *Plygain* – the pre-dawn Communion – and, as she walked to the service, she'd see pinpoints of light moving down the mountainside. The shepherds from the hills, lanterns in hand, would be making their way towards the ancient church, as their fellow shepherds once came to the stable behind the inn in Bethlehem.

The church itself was filled with light: the light of the Christmas Gospel. '*Y mae'r goleuni yn llewyrchu yn y tywyllwch, ac nid yw'r tywyllwch wedi ei drechu ef*' ('The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it'). There is plenty of darkness in our world, and often in our own lives as well, but the Light of Christ is a source of inextinguishable, transforming hope. The message that God loves us enough to come among us as one of us, to share our lives so that he understands from the inside what



it is to be human, and then finally to give his life for us, is so astonishing that we can only respond to it with joy and praise.

The Armenian equivalent of

'*bore da*' or 'good morning' is '*bari luys*' which literally means 'good light'. There can be no better light than the Light of Christ that fills the dawn of Christmas Day. If, despite the hectic business of a modern Advent (a sort of 'Christmas before Christmas' filled with carol services, Nativity plays and general franticness) we can find a few moments of stillness as a thoughtful and prayerful preparation for the coming of the Light, then, through God's grace, it will once again fill our hearts, our homes and our churches this Christmastime.

– Patrick Thomas



### The Shack by William P. Young Published by Hodder & Stoughton Ltd. ISBN 978-0-340-97949-5

WHILST at the Greenbelt Festival in August this book almost "jumped off the shelf" to me. I don't know why – it simply seemed to want to be read. I started to read during the car journey home (I wasn't driving, before you wonder!) and apart from having to stop to sleep, I couldn't put it down, eventually finishing it within 24 hours. There aren't many books I read that way, nor are there many that cause me to shed tears on several occasions as this story led me to do. For me it was an instant hit and had a place on my Top 10 list!

So, what, might you ask, is the story about? Set in America, the youngest daughter of the main character, Mackenzie, is abducted

during a family vacation. Evidence suggests that the little girl, Missy, has been brutally murdered in an abandoned shack in the middle of nowhere, but her body is not found. The family, not surprisingly, suffer terrible grief during the years ahead. Then four years on Mackenzie receives a letter, apparently from God, inviting him to the shack. He is suspicious that this is the killer taunting him, but despite his doubts he feels compelled to go. What he finds changes his life and his beliefs forever. Without spoiling the story for you, I have to say that this story may change your beliefs too. It is beautifully written and the images it builds are at times breath-taking.

Despite its difficult subject matter and sad plot, I found this book to be a healing experience and my immediate instinct was to buy it for several friends who I knew could be helped by it. Anyone who has lost someone they love, will be able to relate to the characters in the story and I would hope would find encouragement within its pages. *The Shack* doesn't try to give easy answers to difficult questions, but it does face them and it faces them "with God."

One thing is certain, you will never think of the Trinity in the same way again. The story is at times humorous, at other times sad beyond belief. It may well reawaken faith in some who feel that their faith is floundering. It is a very special book and I really hope that it is made into a film!

– Heather Cale

## Notices received

**Pilgrim Adventure Holiday's 2009 programme** is now available. These 'journeys for today inspired by the wanderings of the early Celtic Saints' offer, for example, a week in Northern Ireland in May, a trip to the Isle of Man in August and a week based at St Davids. For further information call 01834 844212; [pilgrim-adventure@virgin.net](mailto:pilgrim-adventure@virgin.net)

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