



# Argyll & The Isles

*News and Views from Around the Diocese*

Summer 2009 – No. 92

## FROM THE BISHOP

G K Chesterton is a writer who is not read enough. Not only is he insightful, but he is also hilarious. There is no doubt that he was 'odd', but, in my book oddness expunged from humanity leaves us frankly drab and predictable. He wrote a novel which is very much worth a read: 'The Man who was Thursday'. In it, there is this hilarious, but slightly uncomfortable exchange:

*"This man has insulted my mother!"*  
*"Insulted your mother? What are you talking about?"*  
*"Well, any way, my aunt."*  
*"How could he have insulted your aunt. We have just been sitting here talking."*  
*"Ah, it was what he said just now."*  
*"All I said was that I liked Wagner played well."*  
*"Aha! My aunt played Wagner badly. It is a very tender point with our family. We are always being insulted over it."*

There is a warning, of course, in this little scene. I, like many, am perhaps far too sensitive to what people say to me and, even more if I'm honest, about me. Equally, I am sometimes lacking in care in what I say in conversations and other communications, which can so easily be misunderstood and, even be regarded as hurtful. One of the difficulties that arises from all this is that there is an inclination to become so careful about what is said or written, that nothing is said or written, except carefully contrived and perhaps vacuous words. I can walk around, in my work as Bishop, as if I am constantly facing trip-wires. However, sometimes, words have to be

communicated which are challenging and maybe even painful to receive. What really matters is the truth. I hope I do not lose touch with this lesson.

In Thomas à Kempis' treasured 'The Imitation of Christ', he sheds light on a different approach to over-sensitivity:

*"Do not care much who is with you and who is against you; but make it your greatest care that God is with you in everything you do. Have a good conscience, and God will defend you securely; no one can hurt you if God wishes to help you. If you know how to suffer in silence, you will surely receive Gods help. Since he knows best the time and the way to set you free, resign yourself to him, for God helps you and frees you from all confusion."*

Worst of all, and here I point the finger at myself, over-sensitivity unchecked, can lead to a poisonous moaning and – yes – gossiping, which undermines the roots of 'the tree of love and acceptance'. Perhaps it is rather late in the day to waken up to that lesson! However, the most significant aspect of this is, that I realise that I can only be healed of this inclination by a committed and deep prayer-life, where my affective relationship to God is exposed in the gentleness and truth of God's love in the 'practice of the present moment'.

This can be difficult and painful. In this Diocese. I have met a surprising number of people whose lives are founded on contemplative prayer. They speak in their lives of what has always been in the atmosphere of this 'holy land'. I thank God for them, despite the fact that their God-given gift goes unsung, unpublished and, perhaps by its nature, remains not so much hidden, but in the

hinter-land of what Malcolm Muggeridge called this 'noisy little Christianity'. So for me, at any rate, the vocation perhaps of this Diocese is for it to deepen the contemplative gift that is there to be realised in each person, with the inexpressible spirituality that has since the early Christian centuries been available in this climate of the Spirit. Here perhaps the Episcopalian can absorb the dysfunction of our culture by letting it drop into what Truman Dicken called 'The Crucible of Love' through prayer, so that that love can be expressed through gentleness and truth.

There have been challenging circumstances to face in the Diocese and in Charges, but what I have always felt is that there is an abiding respect for the office of Bishop, without losing any critical edge, essential for the development of mission. Obviously, some of my own personal weaknesses have been uncovered, but that has never been at the expense of the apostolic foundation of our Diocese and Province. Thank you.

Of course, I quickly realised on my arrival that this Diocese is, perhaps, uniquely dependent on the leadership of lay persons in our little congregations. The resourcing and training of that leadership continues to be a major challenge for those of us who have responsibility to maintain and develop our mission:

'Christ calls to live like Him, in Word,  
Sacrament, Prayer and Service  
amongst others.'

However, I do feel strongly that the ordained priesthood is essential to the life of this Diocese, and indeed for the whole Province. To be ordained priest is not to be given a job, or a series of tasks, important though these may be. As a vocation, it is utterly unique, in that it is only understood by its being given by the Spirit of God and not by its achievement or acquisition. The unresolved question for me is whether priesthood is about the management model of Christian leadership. Like 'The Fool' in Shakespeare's 'King Lear', the priest carries the pain of the community in which he or she is placed in a way that leads to a prophetic challenge of that

community. At times, priesthood will be there as a salve to the suffering. At times, it will be there as a sign of the present holiness of God. At times, it will be as 'grit in the shoe'. As the overburdened image has it, I wonder myself whether priesthood is about the giving away of power so that the 'will to power' is challenged. Often, the man or woman ordained a priest will be judged as failing in his or her vocation. I would ask you to read carefully Richard Holloway's sermon for our Diocesan 'Homecoming' Festival in June, included here. I thank God for the priests, whether stipendiary or non-stipendiary in this Diocese, whose faithfulness, humanity and vocation is expressed in 'This is My Body'. This meandering view of priesthood is not about a spiritual gift being focused solely in one role, but that priesthood, in the end, is only such because it is given away as a precious ointment for the unloved.

Thank you to all the charges for your generosity to Elspeth and I over the last five years. Thank you to all of you for the challenge, and in that challenge we have received the Love of God.

We leave for Exeter at the end of September.

'Be the great God between your two shoulders to protect you in your going out and in your coming in. Be the Son of Mary ever near your heart and be the perfect Spirit upon you pouring: Oh! The perfect Spirit upon you pouring' (A Blessing from Iona)

+Martin.

## St John's Cathedral Oban

Holy week and Easter were busy as usual with at least one service every day. For the Good Friday watch, ministers from other Churches in the town again joined us to share their reflections on a Passion theme, this year the Seven Words from the cross. Since then we have also taken our turn in leading the afternoon service in Oban Lorn and the Isles Hospital and held a successful afternoon tea for Christian Aid week. At the end of May on a lovely sunny Sunday the first Quiet Day to be held at Glencruitten House was very successful. Pat Bullimore who is Chair of the Fellowship of Meditation led the day; the small group met in the library for contemplative prayer and also had the opportunity to explore the beautiful gardens at the house.

### *Raising the rafters!*

We've had some fantastic music again this spring with a piano recital by Marek Kochmanski and his students. Oban Bach Choir and Orchestra performed Mendelssohn's 'Elijah' with Bishop Martin singing the part of Elijah. Cordis Vocalis, a choir from Scandinavia gave a concert of Norwegian religious and folk songs and of course there was the Diocesan Festival.

And what a treat to witness the marriage of our Bishop's daughter Madeleine to Eamonn Mulholland! The liturgy was very moving and the music was spectacular; as the preacher, The Rt. Reverend Richard Holloway, put it 'a Hebridean Grand Opera of their own!' As the bridal party left, the officials for the Highlands and Islands Music and Dance Festival were arriving to set up for the afternoon's competition. Lucky the bride got to church on time!

The first weekend in June was a busy one for our choir who were at St Columba's Cathedral in the town on the Saturday for the Royal School of Church Music Scottish Triennial Festival. The following day we were delighted to welcome so many of you to the Diocesan Festival Eucharist on 7<sup>th</sup> June where the congregation was expected to work just as hard as the choir, the tutoring beforehand really paid off! I hope we'll be able to do it again sometime soon.

We are looking forward to the Service of Ordination on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> July 2009, when Joyce Watson from Iona will be ordained Deacon by Bishop Martin in the Cathedral. Joyce will serve on the island of Iona.

Musical events to look forward to include concerts by Choristers from St Mary's Cathedral Edinburgh (27<sup>th</sup> June), Mendelssohn on Mull (4<sup>th</sup> July) and members of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra (25<sup>th</sup> July). Then on 30<sup>th</sup> August, there will be a concert given by our very own Bishop Martin with his daughter and son-in-law Madeleine and Eamonn. This will be an afternoon Concert in the Cathedral, beginning at 4.00pm. We decided on the afternoon time to attract visitors who normally have dinner in their hotels at 7.30pm. This timing has proved successful in the past.

### *Looking ahead:*

Our next major event will be the Bazaar at Corran Halls on 4<sup>th</sup> July, so at the moment it's 'all hands to the pump'- please wish us well for that!

Cont'd

We are looking forward to our dedication service on 16<sup>th</sup> August; we are very pleased that this year it will include the confirmation of some of our younger members.

Please note that the Diocesan Farewell Service to Bishop Martin and Elspeth will take place in the Cathedral on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2009, at a time yet to be decided.

Jane Elliott

June 2009

## ISLAY, ST. COLUMBA

Hurrah ! after a very long wait work on the church extension has not only started but is progressing fast.

We finally got all the warrants and permits in the early part of this year but the weather then conspired against us so building did not commence until last month.

John is now busily re-assembling the Compton Organ from Cumbrae.

We have had a few visitors this year but mostly it has been the faithful five or six who have been sitting in the pews and raising a goodly tune to God. They all now take a turn at reading the Epistle and leading the Intercessions. When Tony and Phil left us to go to Wales the Vestry decided to cut the Services down to twice a month to give this ageing Cleric a bit less work. However we celebrated Whit-Sunday as an additional Eucharist.

Alice Cooper had to move from her sheltered house into the local home up by the hospital and still receives the Eucharist once a month.

John and Lesley Barford still do stalwart work for the church even though they are often away on the mainland. John is overseeing the building project as well as being Treasurer and Organist. Lesley is still our Secretary and Synod (Diocesan and General) Lay Representative. They both went as observers at a Leaders' Conference at Campbletown. On the last Sunday of June they conducted a service of Morning Prayer as Christine and I had to go to the mainland for the funeral of her Brother, Randall. It's good to know that they are there to do this when I have to be away on a service Sunday.

We are waiting to see how much money, if any, will be left in the kitty after the outer part of the extension has been finished, and how much more we will have to raise to furnish the inside.



## ST. MARGARET'S. WHITING BAY, ARRAN

I must begin with a little more sad news, I'm afraid. In the last issue I reported the death of one of our longest standing members, Margaret Marriott. Very shortly afterwards, a second Margaret from our little congregation, Margaret Adam, also passed away. She too had been a faithful supporter of the Episcopal church on Arran from the time of Elsie Wood, before the establishment of our present Church of St Margaret. Like the other Margaret, she had put up a gallant fight against ill-health, and even overcame the effects of a serious stroke by refusing to give in. In fact, in the last two years of her life, she managed to make it to our Sunday Eucharist whenever her daughter was free to bring her, and we were all so very glad to see her there. She too was a devoted Christian and family woman, and we miss her. May she rest in peace, and may she rise in glory.

Like many other small churches in our Diocese, I expect, St Margaret's sees a steady flow of visitors, mainly in the summer months, but a trickle even through the rest of the year. Some of these visitors are first-timers, but many are regulars – country members, as it were. I suppose this is inevitable given the beauty of the country we, like the rest of the Diocese, are fortunate enough to live in. Three years ago, I reported on a little birthday party we gave for some particular old friends, Irene Carter and Olive Whitcombe, whose regular “parish church” is Westminster Abbey. They are both now over ninety, though remarkably hale and hearty, and had decided very reluctantly that this year's trip to Arran must be their last. So on their last Sunday with us in May, we gave a small party for them after the service, with a cake, and some small gifts to remind them of their long association with Arran. The week before, we had another visitor, this time one who had not been to Arran before. The Revd Elizabeth Clark is a Methodist minister from Yorkshire, who had come to see how a little congregation like ours functioned “collaboratively” (as the terminology has had it hitherto). We enjoyed her visit, and we hope she did too. Our visitors, like Elizabeth and Irene and Olive, but there are many others, are something special for us, and help to connect a little, seemingly isolated congregation like ours with the wider Church and the wider world. I hope other small churches spread out through the countryside of our Highland and Island Diocese experience a similar sense of blessing.

This summer looks as though it may not be a washout after all. Let us all enjoy it and give thanks.

JOHN ROBERTS



Irene and Olive receiving their farewell gifts.

## Saint Columba, Gruline, Isle of Mull

Please forgive an old man a 'senior moment'. Most of what is written below was meant for publication in the previous edition of the Argyll & The Isles Journal. But, surprise, surprise, its author forgot the deadline date and this passed while the document sat waiting on his computer. I could claim 'pressure of work', or 'the demands of the parish', but this would be untrue - it was good, old fashioned, forgetfulness! If, dear readers, you are prepared to cast your minds back a month or three, then read on: otherwise, please turn to the next item..

When last I wrote we were preparing for our end of the year events; for Advent, Christmass and the New Year. By well established tradition, these all took place - surprise, surprise! Advent began with one of those few Sundays when we hold two services - Holy Communion in the morning and our candle-lit Carol Service in the afternoon. As always, and to avoid excessive travelling on this large island, from the far-flung corners of which come our congregational members, a light luncheon was organised. A great big thank-you must go to Anne, our organist, for hosting this positive feast. With over one hundred candles and lights, together with the sombre violet altar frontal of this penitential season, the church looked beautiful. A sizeable congregation assembled, despite some rather inclement weather. The service order comprises traditional scriptural passages, interspersed with Advent hymns and some items of recorded music. I am always at pains to tell the congregation that the first voice they will hear in the service is, in fact, that of Bishop Martin. We always begin with Palestrina's *Matin Responsory*, in a recording that the Bishop made with the Choir of Saint Edmundsbury Cathedral when he was Precentor and Sub-Dean there in 1999.

In his December Newsletter Bishop Martin reminded us of the importance of considering The Four Last Things - Death, Judgement, Heaven and Hell - in the Advent season. A preaching opportunity in Advent I had already passed and Advent IV would be occupied with our Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols for Christmass. As a sort of compromise our preacher rolled all four Things into one sermon and at least gave us a taste of each of them and their collective significance. He promised to re-visit them in future Advent seasons so we must be prepared to wait.

The annual carol service was, again, well attended, and we listened to those wonderful, customary lections from Dean Milner White's 'King's College Service' read with



great dignity. We sang some popular carols and listened to a few unusual, if appropriate, musical items, including Cnut's Carol that none of us had heard before. Thus, by stages we came to the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord, which, as the Prayer Book so admirably tells us, is commonly called Christmas-Day. Our little church was packed with islanders and some of the many visitors who come to stay with their families or simply to have a holiday break at that time of the year. Most wonderfully we had eight or ten children in our congregation. This caused our preacher to throw away his formal sermon in exchange for a simple chat with these young worshippers. We examined the significance of the Christmass tree, decorated with its many lights, and explored the importance of the crib and its contents. We determined that one of the many animals sure to have been present at the birth of the Christ child was the donkey upon which Mary rode. When asked if anyone knew how far Mary and Joseph may have travelled from Nazareth to Bethlehem, one little girl of about eight years confidently replied that it was, 'eighty miles'. We were all very impressed - this child will go far!

This year the Feast of the Conversion of Saint Paul (which, of course, occurs on the anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns) coincided with the concluding Sunday of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. By long tradition we offered Choral Matins, to which members of other Christian congregations on Mull were invited. Our packed church heard a most illuminating sermon on the life and times of Paul from Doctor Eric Morgan, an Elder of the Evangelical Church in Tobermory. Lessons were read by members of other churches and our intercessions were led by a lady from the Church of Scotland. We received many kind comments over a cup of tea - many of them from visitors who wondered why we couldn't have these ecumenical services more often. Perhaps there is a new mood of fellowship and understanding in the air. God does move in mysterious ways!

Bishop Martin came to Mull twice in February, once to chair a Vestry meeting and to oversee the AGM. We were given the saddening news of his impending departure at the end of September. His name was quickly added to our list of clergy who are invited to offer locum chaplaincies during the summer months.

So, as they say in these parts, 'Haste ye back, Martin!'

In Lent we assembled each Wednesday morning for an hour or so to study the three Christian virtues of Faith, Hope and Love. Attendance varied but at our final meeting in Holy Week no less than eleven persons were present - that's about half of our regular, indigenous congregation. A service on Maundy Thursday and two on Good Friday brought us to the end of another penitential season. And so to Holy Saturday, when all of our efforts went into preparing the church for The Feast. Easter Day dawned bright and clear and by a few minutes to eleven o'clock we were bursting at the seams! Margaret, who makes the pre-service announcements and welcomes visiting clergy, observed that our little church is normally only full for funerals - but today it was full for a resurrection! It is not often that we have to share hymn books and service orders. *Deo gratias.*

So we move into our summer season with a series of visiting chaplaincy clergy. Many are old friends - some have been coming for twenty and more years - others will be here for the first time. To all of them we bid a kindly welcome. Then we must plan for Bishop Martin's final service on Mull, on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> August. More about this next time I write...

David Fuller  
Lay Leader - Saint Columba, Gruline, Isle of Mull  
15 June 2009



# ***CUMBRAE, CATHEDRAL OF THE ISLES***



'Bishop Martin and Elspeth receive a cake from Christine MacDavid, as does Alastair Chisholm in honour of his becoming Lay Chaplain of the Cathedral at Cumbrae'.



***PENTECOST 2009***

*'Bishop Martin presided for the last time as Bishop of the Diocese and Provost of the Cathedral of the Isles on Sunday 31st May - Pentecost - the Dedication Festival of the Cathedral and College. Alastair Chisholm [Front row on the right] was licenced as Lay Chaplain of the Cathedral. The Reverend Paul Fletcher [back on the left] is spending three months at the Cathedral supporting the work of the Cathedral and College. The Choir sang William Byrd's Mass for Three Voices. Bishop Martin thanked the Congregation at a pot-luck lunch given by them. He commented that the difficulties as well as the joys associated with the management and development of the Cathedral and College are testimony to the determination of all involved to give life and hope from this magnificent and holy space to others.'*



## **WELCOME TO OUR NEW PRIMUS -**

**On the penultimate day of the General Synod the Most Revd. Dr. Idris Jones, Primus and Bishop of Glasgow & Galloway resigned as Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church. The following morning the Bishops of the Province met in Convocation before the assembled Synod members and elected the Rt. Revd. David Chillingworth, Bishop of the United Diocese of St. Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane to succeed him as the new Primus. Bishop David received the Staff of Office from Bishop Idris.**

**Synod gave him a most hearty welcome.**

## **St Kieran's, Campbeltown**

Having invested in several copies of "Proclaiming the Passion", the congregation was duly prepared, well in advance, for the Good Friday Devotional Service. Bob Craig, a long standing friend of St Kieran's, and member of the local Evangelical Church, gave the address, taking, as his text, the reading from the Epistle to the Hebrews, set for the day. Easter Day followed two days later and there was a splendid attendance of visitors, with lots of young children, full of fun and high spirits; all this helped to reinforce the festive nature of the day. Simnel cake and light refreshments followed.

The Bishop of Brechin's article in "Inspires", regarding the lay administration of Holy Communion, drew forthright responses from the congregation, indicating that members at St Kieran's are able to think through issues for themselves and express an opinion which reflects a good understanding of what it is like to be a church in an isolated rural situation.

In late April it was good to have a visit from two of the congregation from St Columba's, Islay. It is hoped that in future we will be able to establish stronger links with all the churches in the Dalriada Region (Islay, Arran and Lochgilphead).

In May, Rod Angus led Morning Prayer for the first time and Jane Mayo lead the Intercessions. The congregational discussion which followed emphasised the importance of the Anglican Church being a broad one; one which could accommodate various styles of churchmanship and understanding in matters of belief.

The united service for Christian Aid was well attended this year, double the number in 2008. Once again the DVD resources, provided by Christian Aid, were used with general approval and music from the Congo helped create an uplifting atmosphere.

At the Diocesan Festival, the Ministry Team from St Kieran's took responsibility for a dramatised reading of the Gospel. It was good to meet up with people from other isolated parts of the Diocese and everyone who made the trip north felt it had been a worthwhile exercise.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Trinity, the congregation sat through the entire final voluntary, clearly impressed by the skill of the composer, Philip Sparke, in his composition – "Fantasy on one note" in which the note G is heard in every bar, but cleverly disguised in order to distract the listener from the monotone.

The local Music Festival took place in mid June and one of the adjudicators, Professor George McPhee, Organist and Choirmaster of Paisley Abbey, was invited to play our new Allen organ during a spare moment from his duties. He was particularly impressed by the sound quality of the instrument and by the various recording and tonal devices, which were available in it.

David O McEwan  
(Lay Chaplain)



## DIOCESAN FESTIVAL – *through the eyes of Christine McIntosh*

### Bows and cheesy grins



Yesterday the Diocese of Argyll and The Isles had a ball. Not the kilts-and-ballgowns type of ball, but the exuberance of a Diocesan Festival which had all the hallmarks of this diocese at its best. With Bishop Martin as MC, Richard Holloway as the preacher at the Eucharist, and some imaginative planning that gave ownership of all the action to everyone present, it was far and away the best festival I've ever attended (and I've seen a few, believe me).

The culmination of the event was undoubtedly the Eucharist, but the Singing Workshop which occupied everyone between eating and worshipping was a highpoint for many who had not previously experienced Mr B's take on singing. With their rib-cages high, two imaginary shopping bags in their hands and their face muscles hooked over their ears, the congregation learned John's Kilbride Mass and sang it with enthusiasm and accuracy – a congregational choir in the best sense. The Cathedral choirs – from St Johns, and the St Maura singers from Cumbrae - sang their own small offerings, but this was a communal effort and all the better for it.

Bishop Richard preached a powerfully relevant sermon on the flawed, broken people of God, reaching the figure of Columba by way of Graham Greene and Paul Tillich. I don't know how many of us were as struck as the people around me by the image of those who had broken their own hearts and who were yet afforded grace when they least seemed to expect it, but it would have been worth making the journey just for that moment. And there was a hair-raising prayer in Gaelic, and a beautiful Gaelic sung meditation which touched us all, even if we had to read the translation.

But the abiding impression of the day was of joyous interaction and friendship, as Bishop, Dean and preacher cracked jokes at/about one another, as the Dean instructed us how best to exchange the Peace when there was the threat of The Plague (*you can give a Buddhist bow – Bishop, demonstrate – or a cheesy grin*), as we all greeted one another with added enthusiasm as if to make up for the lack of handshaking or were hugged in complete disregard for the possible contamination from Dunoon people. (If you have been on another planet: Dunoon is currently the swine flu capital of Scotland, if the meedja are to be believed).

This was the diocese at its crazy Argyll best. People had travelled absurd distances to be there, including [Tim](#), temporarily relocated to Argyll and at the festival because I tweeted it, and there were bizarre conversations – *Your jacket is from Skye Batiks*(mine, and it was) – *how do you prepare a sermon?* (have a meeting. It makes you feel better) – *Is your accent from Hyndland?*(mine again. Yes) – *have you seen their kitchen-in-a-cupboard?*(fabby idea: must copy). We were totally knackered by the time we left, and we still had two hours' driving before home and dinner. But, for all my misgivings when it was first mooted, I had enjoyed a day in which every moment was filled with what felt right. And for all the problems of this tiny diocese, it was a day when I would have belonged no-where else. Slainte!

### BISHOP HOLLOWAY'S SERMON:-

Not everyone likes the novels of Graham Greene or the morally compromised worlds his characters inhabit, called Greenland by critics, a place of spiritual and sometimes physical exile, but I have always been moved by them. Greene is the poet of the moral struggle that is often found in the lives of gifted but flawed people whose inner turbulence is the crucible in which their genius is created. He writes about adulterers whose sins become opportunities for sanctification; corrupt priests in flight from God whom God uses to strengthen fearful believers; haters of God's indifference to suffering who become God's

instrument of consolation to sufferers. The American playwright Tennessee Williams operated in the same territory, with less restraint than Greene; but Greene would have agreed with Williams when he said he was afraid to exorcise his demons in case he lost his angels. Greene found the motto for his own work in lines from Bishop Blougram's Apology, by Robert Browning:

*Our interest's on the dangerous edge of things.  
The honest thief, the tender murderer,  
The superstitious atheist ...*

Though it is sometimes hard to believe, if you look at the Church's record, this is also Jesus' territory: not Greene-land, but Jesus-land. People who think Christianity is for the disciplined and respectable don't know their New Testament. The men and women who were drawn to Jesus were all struggling with their demons - honest thieves, tender murderers, superstitious atheists, saintly adulteresses, people on the dangerous edge of things.

And Columba definitely belongs in that company. Impulsive, charismatic, covetous, a thief of what we would nowadays call intellectual property, when he secretly copied parts of a treasured Psalter, probably a murderer, certainly complicit in the killing at the battle of Cul Drevene - and, supremely, an exile, banished from Irish Dalriada to Scottish Dalriada. Like gifted, flawed people everywhere, Columba would be well aware of his own divided nature, a division that was physically and symbolically expressed by the sea he crossed to his exile in Iona.

The tragedy of people like Columba who do not live up to their expectations of themselves is that they are never really at home in their own hearts. They have disappointed themselves, the way Peter the Apostle did, by turning out to be what they did not anticipate, so they become strangers to their own ideals. Can you imagine how Peter felt after his denials of Jesus? He had not expected that to happen. He did not know who he was till the moment in the courtyard when he discovered that he was not brave and loyal, but, rather, a coward, as stable and dependable as water. Columba would not have known himself either 'till his moment of decision; he would not have realised that he was a thief and a murderer till the occasion presented itself for the revelation of his true character. That is the kind of heartbreak that lies in store for so many of us, as life gradually shows us who and what we are.

**A friend of mine, a Norse scholar, recently sent me an essay she was working on. It is an exploration of the metaphor of weaving in thinking about human destiny. 'Referring to fate or destiny as something that is spun or woven is a well-known metaphorical image in both classical and Old Norse mythology', she writes. In contrast to the Christian tradition which believes that we can decide what we want to become and turn ourselves into it, the understanding of fate in these ancient mythologies says that the choices we make actually uncover what we already are: in other words, rather than making ourselves into something we are not but think we ought to be, by the way we live we find out what we already are. The tension between the weft of fate discovering who we are - and vocation the longing the longing to be what we are not - lies like an ache in the human heart. the longing to be what we are not - lies like an ache in the human heart. Jesus not only understood that ache of disappointment, he *felt* for those who endured it, which is why they**

gathered round him. The beautiful thing they discovered was that he loved them just as they were, and it was that love that would, in time, bring them home to their own hearts. No one expressed this experience of homecoming in the divided heart better than Paul Tillich, the famous theologian and philosopher. This is from his most famous sermon:

*the name of which you do not know. Do not ask for the name now; perhaps you will find it later. Do not try to do anything now; perhaps later you will do much. Do not seek for anything; do not perform anything; do not intend anything. Simply accept the fact that you are accepted! If that happens to us, we experience grace. After such an experience we may not be better than before, and we may not believe more than before. But everything is transformed.”*

That experience of grace is the true homecoming; the coming back to our own divided heart and knowing and accepting it for the first time just as we are, in all our failures and dashed hopes and ruined ideals. We did not know who we were when we took those great vows; we did not know that we were not heroes and saints; did not know those compulsions would never leave us; did not know that in the courtyard we would flee from the challenge; did not know that the lusts and demands of our own nature would lead us to hurt, damage, maybe even kill others. And now we are separated from our own ideals, a stranger to our own longings. We are at sea, our back to our heart's own home. We are Peter. We are Columba. We have failed, know ourselves to be not saints but sinners, sinners who have broken their own hearts. Yes, true, but *we are accepted* with all our divisions, all our flaws, all our wanderings. Columba's sin was to become Scotland's gain. This, too, is part of the mysterious geometry of grace, a geometry that can, if we let it, mend our own broken hearts.

I like to think of Columba not as the tough, fiery warrior priest of his youth, the still-divided man, the man of struggle, the wrestler, still explosive, still violent; but of Columba the old, tired man, finally accepting that he was accepted, and reaching frail fingers out to take the hand of Jesus and come home, finally, to his own heart.



### ***Ordination to the Diaconate:***

*"On Sunday 28th June at St John's Cathedral, Oban, Joyce Watson was ordained Deacon, by Bishop Martin. Joyce has had a long history of service in this Diocese, being at one point the Warden of Bishop's House Iona. As she is a resident of the island, she knows most of the islanders, as well, of course, as the Iona Community. At the Ordination, Sister Jean from the Roman Catholic House of Prayer read one of the lessons. Other denominations were well represented: testimony to Joyce's well established role working ecumenically. Joyce's experience of the island of also of retreat house work, will be invaluable during the transition period to a new Warden at Bishop's House. Gerald Stranraer-Mull preached at the Ordination drawing attention to the Ordinal, in particular, when the Bishops says: 'Through every age he sends his Spirit to fill those whom he has chosen, to equip his people for ministry and to build up his body, the Church'. That's all of us!"*



## QUICUNQUE VULT, VEL QUID?

In response to David Fuller's invitation of comments on the nature of Anglicanism in the Winter 2008 issue: I do not seek to define it in any quasi-exhaustive way, merely to offer another perspective and some caveats.

I belong to St. Paul's, Rothesay, but speak only for myself. Am I a "proper" Anglican? I don't know; whoever wishes – quicunque vult – may debate the point. I would certainly believe that the Scottish Episcopal Church contains people of a variety of views and backgrounds, and not only Anglo-Catholics!

My concern is mainly that Anglicanism should always be a "broad church". This is often unfairly presented as meaning that Anglicans can believe more or less anything or nothing! Not so; they stand in a clear tradition of worship, faith and order – although such traditions are also always in process of change.

I recognise the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds as part of the formal tradition, although personally I do not react all that positively to creeds, being wary of authoritarianism and regimentation of belief, in respect of which the Church Catholic has not always had a record to be proud of! I often think I would be glad if we used in worship some such formula as: "Let us meditate on the mystery of God; those who wish may use the words of the Nicene (Apostles') Creed". It did somewhat surprise me that David Fuller made a special plea for the Athanasian Creed. On the historical side, the weight of scholarship is against David when he places its origin in the third century; Athanasius himself lived in the fourth century, but the Quicunque Vult seems to have no direct connection with him; most recent authorities, including the principal one, Dr. J.N.D. Kelly, would place its origin probably in fifth century Gaul. Its difficulty for liberal Anglicans (including Canon Dick Sheppard and Dr. Thomas Arnold of Rugby) has lain largely in its "damnatory clauses" (1-2 and 28), which assert that there can be no salvation for those who fail to believe its rather abstruse Trinitarian assertions. I am relieved that it has been widely dropped from Anglican worship.

I agree with David that the Common Prayer has many merits, particularly in its verbal felicities – though services and English written largely in the mid-sixteenth century have inevitable limitations for modern worship. As for Coverdale's Psalms, they are often picturesque, but also often poorly translated from a poor Hebrew text, sometimes to the point of near-incomprehensibility – Psalm 87 is a good – or bad! – example. Recently the "tinkering" approach to Prayer Book language so characteristic of the ASB and many modern liturgies has often produced dire results; I am forever cringing at the mangled collects we read in worship! It would often be better to write entirely new prayers, or new translations of Cranmer's Latin originals.



The threefold ministry of bishop, priest and deacon is clearly central to the Anglican or Episcopalian tradition. I do not think, as a matter of historical judgment, that it can be traced back as far as the New Testament, nor is it something that matters a great deal to me personally. What are important to me, and have mainly drawn me to the Episcopal Church, are liturgical worship and the Eucharist.

I sympathise with Bishop Martin and many others who question GAFCON's apparent desire to set up a reactionary and authoritarian system of control within today's Anglicanism. Jokingly I connected their acronym with GAVISCON, saying they seemed to be suffering the pains of spiritual indigestion! More seriously, though – on the chief agitated question I do tend to think that the American Episcopal Church in ordaining a priest in an openly homosexual relationship to the Episcopate did go "a bridge too far".

To conclude, I hope, fairly positively: in addition to what has already been said, I value a broadly rational approach to faith and the Scriptures, good music in worship – at a time when in many places in all churches bad music often seems to be driving out good!-and, of course, prayer, love and the service of humanity. (I am very sure I need to improve in these).

Graeme Allan  
Rothesay.

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**From the Editor:-**

Greetings to all Readers! When I agreed to take on the job of editing the Diocesan magazine I did so with some trepidation, and perhaps some of you are wondering what qualifications I have for the task.

When I left school (early) at 16 years of age I did so because I had always wanted to be a journalist and a vacancy was being advertised with a local South London group of newspapers. I was taken on but had to spend the first six months in the printing department learning the ins and outs of the production side. I was a "Galley Boy" or "Printers Devil" and my job involved getting the galleys of print from the Lino-type operators, inking them and producing paper copies for the Editor, Sub-Editor and Proof Reader. When any corrections had been made I then took the galleys to the print room where they were laid in the appropriate place in the 'frame'. Copies of each frame were then made and I took these to the editorial and advertising staff and the proof reader for a final check before the paper was printed. Sometimes, if he was off sick or on holiday, I would do the proof-reading.

One of the Lino-type Operators and his family befriended me and I would go to their house where he had a small Adana printing press and I would assist in the type-setting of Letter-heads, business cards, wedding invites etc.

When I was in the Royal Air Force I was stationed at Stanmore Park on three occasions and on one of these I joined the Stanmore Park Printing Club, which at that time consisted of one person who, shortly after my joining, was posted elsewhere! The club had a small Heidleberg press and I printed programmes and tickets for the Station Drama Club, letter-heads etc. etc.

Of course, during my (nearly) 40 years in the priesthood, I have compiled, edited and printed a number of Parish Magazines by various means.

With the advent of computers things are done a little differently now but I hope that I can make this magazine pleasant to look at and, with your help, informative. The *Raison D'etre* of the Magazine is of course to link the Parishes of this wide-flung Diocese with each other so that we do not feel alone and out on a limb. To this end your contributions of what you have done and are intending doing will always find a place on these pages provided you meet the "Deadline"! All other articles and views will be published providing that there is room. Unfortunately we have to ensure that we have sets of 4 pages at a time and whilst I will try to fill any gaps it might not be always possible. Articles that have to be omitted will, of course, be included in the next issue if they haven't "time expired".

***Please note that articles etc. should be sent in Microsoft Word form and pictures as jpegs.***

I wish you all Happy Reading.  
Ken Skipper, Islay.

DEADLINES FOR THE NEXT ISSUE ARE:  
WEDNESDAY 21<sup>ST</sup>. OCTOBER FOR ARTICLES, LETTERS ETC. *AND*  
WEDNESDAY 28<sup>TH</sup>. OCTOBER FOR PARISH NEWS ITEMS.

In all probability I will have changed my ISP provider by then but will email/write to all Charge Correspondents and the Diocesan Office will also have note of it.

# **R.I.P**

## **Miss Flora MacInnes**

*Flora MacInnes was born at 11 Carnoch Glencoe in 1922. She was christened and confirmed in St Mary's Church. She was a choir member and also was a vestry member most of her adult life. She also held the positions of both secretary and treasurer for 8 years.*

*Her early schooling was at St Mary's primary School and then to Kinlochleven Secondary School.*

*When she finished school she went to Skerry's Secretarial College in Glasgow and on completing her course came back home to Glencoe. She then got a position in the Glencoe Hotel and then went to work at Glencoe Estate. She then moved on to work with British Alcan in Kinlochleven and after a number of years was transferred to British Alcan Lochaber to become Managers Secretary.*

*She retired in 1982 and returned to live in Glencoe and she became very involved again in the St Mary's Church, meals on wheels and the WRI. Her funeral was held at St Mary's and was conducted by Rev Donald Davidson. The Church was full with her many family and friends from near and far. This lady will be sorely missed by one and all and no more than St Mary's Church our mentor no more in body but by jolly her spirit is still with us all.*



Flora with her great, great niece Katy Craig

## **The Very Reverend Randal McAlister**

*Although Randal didn't serve in this Diocese he was well known and respected by many in it, as well as by a vast number of people throughout the Province. His sudden and most unexpected death came as a great shock to all who knew him, not least his family. The many messages of sympathy received by them have been greatly appreciated.*

*The Requiem Mass was held in St. Mary's Church, Kirriemuir with the Rector, Revd Canon Dr. Robert Harley leading the worship, the Primus, the Most Reverend David Chillingworth as Celebrant, the Rt. Revd Dr. Robert A Gillies, Bishop of Aberdeen and Orkney leading the Intercessions and the Very Revd Dr. Emsley Nimmo, Dean of Aberdeen and Orkney reading the Gospel in Gaelic. One of Randal's sons, Mark, read Henry Van Dyke's "The Zest of Life."*

*In a moving address the Primus spoke of Randal's gentle, friendly and caring qualities and said that he was the epitome of the Priesthood.*

## **Private Robert McLaren**

*The Diocese joins with the parents, relatives, friends and the people of Mull on the death by enemy action of Robert in Afghanistan.*

*"May the souls of the faithful departed rest in eternal peace, and light perpetual shine upon them"*

# **HUMAN RIGHTS**

As you are well aware, there are many major Moral Problems facing Mankind in our present age – problems which we cannot escape from by saying either that they do not directly affect us, or that we, as Individuals, are powerless to do anything about them. The problems are there and they belong to ALL MANKIND. They include for instance, the issues raised by the powerful call for Assisted Dying laws; illegal immigrants; the use of strike action and picketing; global warming; religious intolerance and acts of terrorism; continuing warfare and the extreme poverty to be found in so many parts of our world.

Space does not permit an in-depth study of even one of these issues and obviously there is no easy solution to any of them, but when they are all ‘lumped’ together one fact stands out clearly – that they have a common denominator – and that is the Prime Importance of the Individual and his or her Right to be treated exactly the same as anyone else in the world.

When God created Mankind He created us in His Image and as equals one to another. Nowhere can we find Him as saying that any particular human being or group of human beings shall have dominion over others – only He is Lord of Mankind. It is true that we each are endowed with different gifts and abilities – but these are given to us that we might serve each other. Obviously if there is to be good order in Society then some must be Leaders and others followers. It is a fact of Nature that some are more intelligent than others, but this does not deny the basic right of any Individual to Live, that is, to have sufficient food, clothing and shelter to keep physically fit; to be afforded every opportunity for developing the mind and manual skills, and, perhaps most importantly, to be afforded due and proper respect as a Child of God by each and every other Child of God’s Creation.

These basic Rights of each and every human being are paramount to good order in this our world and the ills we see around us are due to the fact that not every human being acknowledges or affords such Rights to his or her neighbours. The Christian, by virtue of claiming Christ as personal Saviour, must surely be in the forefront of those who DO afford such Rights and respect to his or her neighbour, for such RIGHTS are a part of Christ’s Salvation for all Mankind. We are born to grow to the fullness of the Stature of Christ who is both Man and God. If we look down on any of our fellow human beings or treat them in anything less than a neighbourly and humane way we are personally responsible for stunting their growth and we will find that we ourselves will not be received by Christ on the Day of Judgement because where we have offended against them we have also offended against Him.

We must, each and every one of us, proclaim this fact; treat our neighbours as Christ would have us treat them, and do all that is in our power to ensure that Individuals, Power Groups and National Leaders know that all human life is Sacred to God.

If we do not do these things we are a discredit to our Church and its’ Master.

Ken Skipper.

# Something for the younger generation!

## Ski Part

Our artist has left part of this picture unfinished. Can you help him find the right picture from the four above.

## CROSSPIC

Answer to Ski Part = No. 4