



St Paul's Church, Rondebosch Parish Newsletter

CARITAS

October 2017

Fr Jim Harris reports on **Diocesan Synod August 2017**

Synods tend to be times when rules and guidelines are tidied up, when key interests or important matters are presented and debated. Sometimes members of synod respond to ideas arising from the Archbishop's Charge – which is what his sermon at the opening Eucharist is called.

All of these elements were evident at this year's Synod. Indeed, the highlight was Archbishop Thabo's Charge. It was informative and passionate. It called for new parishes to be established, for theological education to be expanded in new and creative ways, for us to be deeply concerned over the state of the nation, to beware of indifference, and to have hope. The Archbishop wants us to see hope as a protest against the indifference and callousness of so much in society. This is an aspect of "intentional discipleship". Equally, this approach to discipleship reaches out to the youth, releases resources, and responds to God's call in all areas of life.

Synod is invariably a time when all the representatives connect with each other. Many of the parish reps attend Synod year after year, so we all know each other. This year there were a very good number of young folk, many of whom contributed ably, often bringing humour through their lack of knowledge regarding protocols etc. They raised some helpful points in the life of the Diocese. In the bible study group I was part of, there were two young women who made some really interesting observations.

Sadly, negative comments were made during a debate on a motion requesting pastoral guidelines for those in civil unions. So painful were these comments that one representative spoke up expressing that hurt and urging Synod to consider carefully the language used. Bishop Garth took time to respond and tried to clarify the situation. Having done that, Michael Bester indicated that the matter "be put"

which brought the debate to an end. No final resolution or decision emerged, so we are all still in limbo regarding the guideline sought.

Outside of the above debate, nothing was controversial. The discussion on Wynberg St John's development of a leadership academy in relation to St Mellitus College in the UK, was exciting. The academy has eleven people in training currently. They work closely with the Diocesan Dean of Studies and the Diocesan training.

[The parish thanks Father Jim and Wayne who attended Synod on our behalf. Both Benjamin and Monika had to withdraw.]

His Grace the Archbishop, introducing his Charge to Synod, said that there were three questions that Synod needed to ask

- How do we address the **needs of our youth**, both inside and outside the "stained glass" of our churches?
- How do we **respond to the call**, issued by the Communion and our Provincial Synod, and discussed at *Anglicans Ablaze*, for Intentional Discipleship?
- How do we release God's money and other resources to **help young people**, both inside and outside the "stained glass", to cope with the world outside the stained glass.

(Ed. It seems that the stained glass barrier was not just well maintained during Synod proceedings but given a good polish!

Was there discussion about the plight of children growing up in drug and rape-infested communities, about the lack of policing, the lack of parenting, the lack of counselling?

The needs of our youth, our response to this call and debate about what the Church should be doing were not addressed. Was there comment about the removal of all spiritual content from our education system? are people just bodies and brains with no souls? Was there mention of the destructive student unrest of recent months and the threat that this poses for our universities and colleges? CPUT students have tried to burn down St Mark's Church, iconic in its stand against evil.

REVIVE THAT ONCE VIBRANT MINISTRY OF THE ANGLICAN CHAPLAINCY.

Who must ask that question? St Paul's. Who must answer it? The Archbishop.

And, at a time when our country is reeling from financial collapse, moral decay and lack of leadership, Synod apparently did not produce even a whisper of alarm about government corruption and mis-management and the example this shows to our "youth".

Invite Zapiro next time!)

No Rector yet! The Rectory repairs are nearly complete. Is it reasonable, therefore, to expect that a new Rector may be appointed soon? On Ember Days, the prayers of the laity are believed to fan the flames from the glowing coals of vocation. It is a serious cause for concern that very sadly, for some years, few men and women are being "called" to the ministry. That prayer list is almost empty, there are few glowing coals of holy vocation and this is a serious cause for concern. Which is it? Is God not calling people or are they not listening to Him?

The future of the Anglican Chaplaincy at UCT and its relationship to St Paul's remains undecided. Hope is deferred again! How do we repair the damage of the past five years and bravely go forward with a new spirit? With the possibility of further student unrest, can we offer comfort and counsel to those who are injured and confused, both students and staff?

In the past St Paul's hosted an Academic Service for everyone attached to the university, whatever their denomination - a memorable occasion at the start of each year. The Vice-Chancellor and Council were invited and people wore academic dress. What prevents us from having this again? Your comment is invited.

"Something wrong here needs attention
Something wrong here needs correction
Let's get things right here. Let's put life in its own perspective.
Why this rape? Why this robbery?
Have we now buried the Spirit of Ubuntu?
Why do we have to be bribed before offering assistance?
Do we qualify to call ourselves a Nation?
Are we treating each other as brothers and sisters?
Can we open our house for all? Can we leave our cars unlocked?
Church? What is your role? Voice of the voiceless, why be quiet? "

(from Oh, What a Nation" by Dr W A Mabindla, Mthatha) and sent by Lorna Heighway

"There is a decay of principles . . . a decay of the individual's responsibility and share in government which seems to strike at the roots of our human advance. . . , a new sort of hero-worship is arising which saps the very foundations of individuality and makes the individual prostrate himself before his leader as before a god . . . that way extreme danger lies . . . the new Tyranny, disguised in attractive patriotic colours, is enticing youth into its service . . ." Jan C.Smuts, who became Prime Minister of South Africa, speaking to the students at St Andrew's University, Scotland, in 1934.

*Please bring, from you and your friends,
and from people who are not your friends*

BOOKS
RECORDS DVDS
MAGAZINES
and even old Christmas cards

Enid 083 287 7876

Margaret 072 998 2588

We can take them if you bring them to church, or come to fetch if necessary.
These are all being collected to sort and mark for a

BOOK FAIR

on

Saturday October 28th
8.30 – 12 midday
in St Paul's Church Hall
when your lovely breakfast will also
be served.

Holy Eucharist in the Lady Chapel 8 a.m.

There will be a

QUIET MORNING

on Saturday, November 11th, Remembrance Day

(when we remember all who died in World War I, World War II, the Korean War - and all wars!)

Last November we had a Quiet Day at Little Streams in Constantia and it was very beautiful there. None of us who went will forget it

This year John Ramsdale of St George's Cathedral will present an hour's programme about

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

after

Holy Eucharist at 8.30 a.m.

and then we meet

in the church Hall

beginning about 9.30 a.m.

and lasting about an hour

Full details have not been arranged yet. There will probably be a small charge for tea and coffee, and for a modest gift to John. It will not be a proper breakfast!

This programme was presented this year at the Cathedral during Holy Week, in Grahamstown during the Festival and at Christchurch in Constantia last month.

It will be open to anyone who wishes to come.

Please note that there is a Quiet Morning on the last Saturday of every month at Springfield Convent from 9 a.m.

Enquiries may be made to Ann Hahn 082 749 6166

Regarding women

here is a fragment of the writings of an Anglican priest, Thomas Gisborne M.A., and printed in 1801. He was regarded as an academic authority at the time.

“The gay vivacity and the quickness of imagination, so conspicuous among the qualities in which the superiority of women is acknowledged, have a tendency to lead to unsteadiness of mind; to fondness of novelty; to habits of frivolousness and trifling employment; to dislike of sober application; to repugnance to graver studies, and a too low estimation of their worth; to an unreasonable regard for wit, and shining accomplishments; to a thirst for admiration and applause; to vanity and affectation. They contribute likewise to endanger the composure and mildness of the temper, and to render the dispositions fickle through caprice, and uncertain through irritability. Of the errors and failings which have been already specified, several are occasionally aggravated by the acute sensibility peculiar to women . . . liable to sudden excesses . . . unmerited attachments . . . the source of suspicion, fretfulness, and groundless discontent and sometimes degenerates into weakness and pusillanimity, and prides itself in the feebleness of character which it has occasioned. . . .” and so on and on for a whole book which is very difficult to read because all the “s”s are “f”s!

This was only 200 years ago. The established church can be wrong.

Prejudice against women was still active in my youth. My father did not think I needed Latin and Maths - women should be trained in the housewifely arts and it was a tremendous step for him to agree to my entry into medical school. Even there, when only a few women students turned up at a lecture, the professor said “Because no-one is here today, there will be no lecture!” in my class there were only 12 women students – out of 120. We were a group apart – not long ago!

All women should realise what a battle it was to achieve the franchise and to get some rights. The right to vote was fought for, less than a century ago. Treasure it.

Do not forget that a few decades ago it was unheard of for a woman to become a lawyer, or a doctor – or a priest!! The Church (I almost say “as usual”) was the most prejudiced of all.

Women in the priesthood

25 years ago attitudes were really hard to change. One newly ordained priest, sent to her first parish, was met by her churchwardens walking out in protest and they did not return until she was transferred elsewhere. We have been privileged at St Paul’s to have been served by many remarkable women priests, among them

Jo Tyers filled in as UCT chaplain for a while – and began the firm who make vestments.

Wilma Jakobsen, the UCT chaplain who repeatedly challenged us from the pulpit and with apparently boundless energy inspired a whole generation of students.

Erika Murray, dependable, supportive and kind, our Lent course inspirer.

Pat van der Rede, who was prepared to do anything and everything.

Reeva Mulder, the deputy-Head teacher who was prepared to dunk her head in water playing bob-apple and is now at St Cyprian's Church in Retreat.

Elizabeth Cherry, who kindly filled in last year and would have liked to come again! and Margaret Vertue, who was part of our congregation before she entered the ministry and then became Bishop of False Bay.

Here is the statement from ordained women:

We the women, meeting to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the ordination of women to the priesthood, give thanks to God that we can celebrate this historic event,

Humbled by the wisdom shared as we commemorated the struggle for ordination, while acknowledging that we still have many challenges to overcome, we commit ourselves to continue to allow women's voices to be heard in cry and lamentation so that we can continuously seek ways to overcome the limitations that women priests face today,

Humbled that our younger generation of women can draw from the well springs of wisdom of previous generations through whom we can be mentored, moulded and strengthened, we hereby make the following pledge:

- We will, promote, normalise and regularise inclusive practices across our organisations, policies, structures and hierarchy.
- We will continue to strive for both gender equality and gender equity in ACSA.
- We will work toward universally set minimum basic standards and criteria for levels of education and skills required for deacons, priests and bishops.
- We will prioritise theological education and ministerial formation.
- We commit to continuous education, training, development within the church.
- We commit to ensure that Deacons, priests and bishops are intentionally mentored in their roles of leadership.
- We commit to the use of affirming and inclusive language, when teaching about God and about human beings and in our liturgy and worship.

THE PARISH REGISTER

FILL IN YOUR FORM PLEASE.

So far about 40 people have completed the forms. Of course, many of us are confident that we are “so well known” that everyone knows where and who we are, but it is important to keep our lists up to date. Parish registers of the past are fascinating. All the details are there, not only the particulars of who lived in the house, who was baptised, who was confirmed, and how active they were in the parish – or inactive! These registers become archives! the message is clear: Fill in your form please and return it so that the parish can be defined in people, not geography, and so that you too can become part of the history of Rondebosch.

Most of you who read this are the *crème de la crème* of the congregation, people who give generously, perhaps sacrificially but, if you are more casual, please check that you have fulfilled your pledge! There is no blame to this – we can all get a bit casual/busy/forgetful/or plain broke!! But our Pledge coffers are down, far down. There are too many defaulters. We wish we could exist on fresh air, but we can't! sorry! So fill those envelopes and pop them in the plate.

What you might have given or spent on a Church Bazaar – put that in too for good measure.

Perhaps more important than money and lists are your innermost feelings about the church and its “soul” – and your feedback would be appreciated.

What sort of person would **you** like to ask the Bishop to appoint to St Paul's?

What would you like to see at St Paul's, in the way of worship, activities, programmes? You might say what you really like about St Paul's;

What keeps you coming here?

What do you want to hold on to that we already do?

What would you like to see changed?

What would you like to see introduced? discussed? done?

If you have any ideas for the parish, please let us have them.

Interim Rector: Revd Jim Harris, who will be happy to visit you

Assistant Priest: Revd Darron Misplon, a full-time teacher during school term

St Paul's office: Ph 021 6894720 email: stpauls@netdial.co.za

[Contributions received with thanks at the A/C St Paul's, Standard Bank, Rondebosch, 71488928](#)

I was looking at the register for Christ the King Church on Milner Road, dated in the early 1960s. There were some odd scribbles in the margins, in Greek! I asked our priest what one of them meant – “Ah yes” he replied, “that means that she was in the bath when I called.” And this one, I asked, thinking that some deep spiritual secret would now be revealed . . . “Ah yes” said he, “she was in the bath again.”

About one third of the people of Christ the King Parish had to move as a result of the Group Areas legislation because in that part of Claremont, even more than here in Rondebosch, we were completely mixed. St Matthew’s parish was another like this. Bordering upon Athlone and Lansdowne, we were a sort-of grey area where no-one knew or cared about how we were classified . . . until that dread day when you came home and found that awful sheet of paper fluttering on the front door! There are many stories to be told . . .