

In Touch

The Cathedral Magazine - Summer Edition

ST JOHN'S CATHEDRAL HONG KONG

Diocese of HK Island Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui

香港聖公會聖約翰座堂



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Anglican Ambassador To Rome Captivates Pilgrims

By Nigel Gibson

Thirty-one pilgrims from St John's received the warmest of greetings after stopping by at the Anglican Centre in Rome in June. Their visit was part of the Cathedral's recent 10-day pilgrimage to Rome and Assisi.

Upon arrival, Archbishop Sir David Moxon greeted the pilgrims with light refreshments, which he himself served in his own drawing room in the exquisite Palazzo Doria Pamphilj. It was the first of many signs of David's generosity, openness and humility that made a deep impression on the pilgrims.

Later, in the chapel, David gave an inspiring address on his ministry in Rome, which is essentially twofold: he is the Archbishop of Canterbury's Representative to the Holy See as well as the Director of the Anglican Centre.

Archbishop David described the Centre as an Anglican 'Embassy' in Rome that promotes Christian unity through hospitality, prayer and education. Its core vision is of 'One Church, for one world – God's world'.

The Anglican Centre also brokers joint initiatives by the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches. Presently, said David, the two churches are seeking new ways to be more effective instruments of the justice and righteousness of God amongst those who suffer most, especially those trapped in poverty, the persecuted, and the increasing number of refugees around the world.



David Moxon addresses the pilgrims

Choirmaster Retires On A High Note

By Nigel Gibson

Much respected St John's choirmaster Raymond Fu has retired after 36 years in post. Raymond's commitment to St John's began as a choirboy in 1968 and he continued to sing in the choir until his appointment as choirmaster in 1979, taking over from choir mistress Cecilia Kwok, who stayed on as cathedral organist.

During his tenure Raymond worked with six deans and passed on his extensive knowledge and love of music to countless choir members and music students, young and old.

In an interview for *In Touch* in this issue, Raymond said, "It was a great honour to be appointed but 36 years is too long for anybody. A different voice can have a different impact."

To honour Raymond's remarkable contribution to the musical and liturgical life of St John's and the HKSCH, a special Celebration Concert was held in the Cathedral on 27th June. During the



Summer grand finale for Raymond Fu

concert the Cathedral Choir, the Diocesan Choir and Children's Choir, The Pelicans, Giuseppe Fu and the St Paul's College Alumni Choir performed at their very best in grateful thanks for Raymond's ministry.

In Touch

This is our First Anniversary edition! That's right, *In Touch* is now one year old and we continue to be a forward-looking magazine whenever we can be. Yet sometimes it is a joy to look back and we do so with pleasure in several places in this issue.

An outstanding moment for recollection has been the retirement of Raymond Fu as choirmaster after 36 years. In an exclusive interview with him, he tells of his efforts to forward musical standards and to widen the liturgical repertoire, and what he very firmly feels needs to be done in the future.

Raymond is retiring but not leaving the Cathedral family. Sadly, there are others who have made significant contributions to our church and have left Hong Kong in recent weeks. James and Marcela Collins have retired to their home in James' native Wales; James Dunlap has retired to Vancouver; George and Susan Thomas have gone back to live in Kerala; and Eric and Stacey Usher have moved to Tokyo. We feature them in this issue and we will miss them.

The Revd John Kater provides us with an ever-incisive book review, which also marks the coming to the end of his annual visit to us and his most recent series of lectures at Ming Hua Theological College.

Still very much with us is the Cathedral Bookstore. We are reminded that the shop is 30 years old this year by a delightful article by one of the Bookstore's founders, Wendy Larkin, who now lives in England. Her piece not only goes into interesting detail about its beginnings but it also reminds those who were

here to remember, and tells those who were not about the extraordinary period of false ceilings, partitions and cocklofts in the Li Hall, created to provide working space. Accompanying the article are some splendid period pictures and one or two familiar faces.

We are looking outward in this issue too. The Dean's report on his recent visit to South Africa reflects the impact that his experience of the abiding love of God amongst those who had suffered oppression had on him.

We are also publishing a major report on the recent St John's Pilgrimage to Rome and Assisi. It would be easy but falling short to describe a journey like this as religious tourism. By all accounts it was one of prayerfulness and sacrament and a spiritual destination was found along the way, for many, at Assisi.

In this issue we're going to go big with a picture of the 2015/16 Cathedral Council. Unfortunately, some new lay members, perhaps because they are not in journalism or entertainment, do not understand the importance of a photocall. As you see on the next page, quite a few of them aren't there. Still, it is worth showing you those who are to mark an unusual year. There are six new members on the Council, a turnover not seen for many years and, dare one say, healthy for our governance?

An early reminder that copy deadline for the autumn edition is **24th August, 2015.**



New Faces on St John's Council

In an unusual gust of fresh air, six new members were elected to the Cathedral Council at the 2015 Annual Church Meeting.

Alexandra Barr is a barrister who has used her professional skill as a board member of the Helpers for Domestic Helpers outreach ministry since 2005 and as its chairwoman since 2014. She attends the 9 am service and her love of choral music has led her to sing in the Evensong choir. She is involved in the Card Fair, the Michaelmas Fair and the Parish Walk.

Dolores Dayao has been a member of St John's since 1981. She has served on the Council in the past and is often very involved during services. She is a lesson reader, a chalice bearer, a member of the Servers' Guild and a member of the Welcomers' group.

John Li Kwok Heem was baptised at St John's and worshipped there until his young adulthood. He answered the calling to come back three years ago when he was asked to join the Cathedral Choir and wishes he had never left. Always keeping his faith, he has been on the board of the United Christian Hospital since 1989 and is currently its chairman.

Leo Li Ming Fai is an engineer by profession who has been a dedicated member of the Mandarin congregation for the last nine years and a founding member of the Mandarin Choir. He has been a board member for the development of Evangel College, Tsung Kwan O and the Evangel Children's Home.

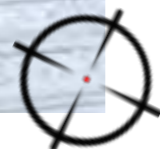
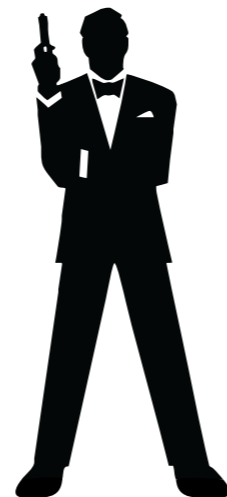
Edward Ng and his wife Wincey have been attending St John's since the mid-90s. Their sons were baptised here and attend Sunday School for which Edward has helped organise the annual outing. He joined the Michaelmas Fair Committee last year and intends to put his experience as a fund manager and fundraiser to good use.

Margaret Sang Pui Nor is a chartered secretary and currently chief operating officer of a major securities and investment company. She was admitted to the Cathedral Choir in 1995 and has also sung with the Evensong Choir for many years. She is a member of the Servers' Guild, serving mainly at the Cantonese and Mandarin services.



Attendees at the April 2015 Annual Church Meeting

Move over 007.
The name is Koon,
Peter Koon



RAYMOND FU: THE RETIREMENT INTERVIEW



At a special Thanksgiving and Celebration Dinner in the Hong Kong Club on 5th July, Raymond received heartfelt thanks and praise from Archbishop Paul for his dedicated service at St John's and in the HKSXH. Earlier in the day, the Dean announced in the Cathedral that he had conferred on Raymond the title Choirmaster Emeritus, in recognition of his long and distinguished ministry in St John's.



His lead into the choirmaster position was a gradual almost casual apprenticeship. He began as boy in the choir in 1968 and from 1973 onwards, Cecilia Kwok, the choir mistress and organist, asked him to help her out. He was not alone in doing that. The Revd Moses Wu and the Revd Alan Ho also stood in for periods. In 1979, when he was by now teaching at Kowloon Tong School, Cecilia suggested that he might take a 6-week summer course in church music for overseas Anglicans at the Royal School of Music at Addington Palace in Croydon, England.

The course, with its morning to night music making, visits to churches and chapels including Cambridge and the Southern Cathedrals Festival, and lectures from visiting musicians made a great impact on Raymond and left him bitten deep by cathedral music. On his return, Dean Sidebotham invited him to become choirmaster and Cecilia continued as organist. "It was a great honour and out of ignorance I accepted!"

In those early years many overseas music examiners with strong Church music traditions visited the Cathedral and Cecilia introduced them to the young choirmaster. "They conducted the choir, brought new repertoires and insights into choir training. It was a kind of continuous learning. It gave me such a strong sense of the target our own Cathedral choir should aim at."

The choir that Raymond inherited was still heavily expatriate, with a strong complement of British civil servants whose children sang treble parts. Culturally, this was reflected in sophisticated afternoon teas before choir practice. But membership was dropping. Dwindling expatriate numbers were leaving a vacuum that few Chinese locals were willing to fill. Separate 9 o'clock and Matins choirs could not be sustained, so they merged. Raymond himself, now teaching at St Paul's College as head of music, brought students from there to the choir and, gradually, adult membership revived in the 80s from the growing, more cosmopolitan Hong Kong financial sector. As the style of music under Raymond became more classical and liturgically elaborate, it attracted more people with an interest in giving their time to it.

Just days before Raymond Fu conducted his last service as St John's choirmaster, Stuart Wolfendale caught up with him for an exclusive interview for In Touch. In it, Raymond spoke candidly about his long career in music, retirement and the future, and he pulled no punches when defending his strong and at times demanding artistic temperament.

"I am much closer to God when I conduct. I am the closest person to the East Window, the choir is helping me with the music I have chosen, the High Altar is in front of me; I feel like I am half in heaven." This is the most rewarding of all the uplifts that Raymond Fu has experienced as choirmaster at St John's. The sight of him in the chancel is one that all those attending a Sung Eucharist and the great festival services have been familiar with and now it is no more. On 31st July 2015 he retired after 36-years in post.

Raymond has freshness about him, relaxed, tanned with an artistic goatee and a vigorous wave of peppered silver hair which suggests he is ready to keep right on going but that is not what he has in mind. His vision for the future is as certain as the direction he has given in the past but this time, he does not feature in it.

"36-years is too long for anybody. Trying to catch up with the repertoire of the big cathedrals we need to change internally. We need to have reform coming from within the choir, otherwise there is a limit where we can go with the present set-up. I have used up my vocabulary trying to convince people of things we need to do. A different voice can have a different impact. Now it's good that the Dean is appointing a Director of Music. We need an overview of the whole music ministry also. A hundred flowers are blossoming but there needs to be pruning too. Our landscaping is unbalanced at the moment - but we know where we are going, I think."



Raymond believes that St John's took a leap upon the establishment of the Province, more boldly setting itself as a model in liturgy and music. Not yet boldly enough though.

"I would like us to be on par with other cathedrals but it takes effort to transform from a parish church to a cathedral church. My approach is to get to the mainstream. What we sing here now on a Sunday is similar to cathedrals and big parishes in England, except in our communion settings. Most cathedrals change them every week. I have tried hard to convince everybody we should try to change more often and more people recognise that we have to work on this. But still we have to be careful not to offend the sense of parish in the congregation. So, up to now, I have succeeded in changing the setting once every 3 months with more classical settings on special feast days and many big English parishes do this too. Finding the balance which suits our own cathedral will be the best solution."

Under Raymond Fu, St John's music has become more cosmopolitan. It spreads from the Renaissance to the 21st century. He found an easy example to hand. "This coming Sunday we will sing a Poulenc anthem and the following Sunday a totally contemporary one from the young Norwegian Ola Gjeilo. Twenty years ago, we were doing just English Tudor and 19th century material; Parry or Croft or Morley who are fine in themselves but more restricting."

Raymond emphasises that what happens in English cathedrals is not always English music. "They have a duty to demonstrate to the parishes good music and new repertoires." Sometimes visiting examiners have liked the choir so much they have written pieces for it. Christopher Gower, organist of Peterborough Cathedral, wrote a Hong Kong Mass especially for St John's.

Raymond spoke of a critical paradox in choir development which faces St John's. "It's rather like buying audio equipment; you spend more and more money to get smaller and smaller degrees of better reproduction. It's proportionately less sound for your money but it depends on whether you treasure that little bit. To make the marginal but significant improvements you yearn for in a choir, you must make even more effort. In this respect, we are at a critical point - a bottleneck. Like a jigsaw puzzle, we must take out one piece to move the others around. That's me. That's alright. I hope this piece will be useful elsewhere."

In his early days as choirmaster, Raymond told choir member John Endicott that he had three dreams, all of which became reality. He wanted to have CD recordings of the choir and this has been achieved. He dreamed of traditional full Mass settings in services because there were never full settings twenty years ago, and this came true. And his third vision was for the choir to perform outside. "Our ministry does not stop at these four walls. We need to bring our good news to new places, as cathedral and Oxbridge College choirs do. We do tour now, though not often enough. These events make the choir more organised as they get into a project for outside."

There are two further dreams he spoke about to Endicott which have remained just dreams. One is for a proper pipe organ, but he did not linger now over that HK\$10 million baby. The other is the periodic inclusion of professional singers to deliver some of the more sophisticated music as bigger cathedrals do. This has met opposition but Raymond still presses the point.

"An amateur choir has its limitations and there are ways round them. The American method is to employ professional singers, part-time. Alternatively, we could offer choral scholarships to attract young students from local music schools who could come for a fee per session. Their training means they learn faster and their voices are better."

Raymond managed to successfully pitch the idea to the Friends of Cathedral Music in the UK who gave £10,000 in 2011 to fund such singers. The funds sit in the account still unused, partly because only the income generated off the capital may be used and partly because of internal disagreement. "I could convince donors far away but I quite honestly could not convince people inside here because there are people who felt that once professionals were brought in they would become less useful. I gave up. We have not spent a cent."

How hard has it been for him to recruit good voices from a pool of amateurs? "In the beginning, I had to take anyone who was enthusiastic as long as they were not tone deaf. Then I took the boys from the school and tightened auditions and standards for admission could increase, bit by bit. For the choir, it's been like walking up hill for ages and turning round and saying, 'Wow! Have we come that far?'"

There have been kickbacks from success. People re-auditioning who got in the choir in the past, could not anymore. One candidate tried twice and protested to the Dean that she was ready to give her time and full commitment. "I was really sorry but she could not follow, could not cope with the existing standard."

Anyone who has had just glancing contact with St John's choir will have heard that Raymond Fu was a demanding leader. How true was this? With gently voiced reason, the Kapellmeister moved into an assuring explanation. "They say you need a more humorous, friendly approach these days. Unfortunately in music you can have only one way of doing it. Convincing others only comes in a firm and certain way. You can only achieve the limits of an amateur choir where many come from work with other stuff on their minds by firm and clear instructions. If I work with professionals, I am different. It's their bread and butter and they know they have to do what they are told. In rehearsal I use limited time to force my way through a demanding repertoire. You have to be a demanding conductor with amateurs."

He dismisses a widely held perception. "I have never kicked anyone out. Once in, they can be lifetime members. If they leave they do it voluntarily or because they have not met the required attendance level but that's not my decision, it's the decision of the choir committee. It's not about musical standard."

Of the big events of his three-plus decades in post that he recalls as special, it would have been surprising if Raymond had not included the ceremonial funeral of Governor Sir Edward Youde. It was not just the prominence of the event that sticks in his mind but the challenge posed by its very short notice, which was a great public challenge to the choir.



More surprising was that high on his list came the broadcast from St John's of the BBC's religious broadcasting war horse *Songs of Praise*. "The BBC's requirements were very meticulous about repertoire, rundown and even choir seating," recalls Raymond, "the choir suddenly grew because they came to know how these things were done."

Raymond's roles as choirmaster and school music master were "80 per cent complementary and 20 per cent a clash," he says. "Many of the students I brought here were grateful for having learned about the Church and its music and musicians from the Cathedral went to St Paul's College to give classes. Sometimes, I had to leave school early for special events so it did not get 100 per cent of my energy, I have to confess but, on balance, the school benefitted." Raymond is a realist about what leaving that high spot in the chancel and worshipping in the nave will involve. "I will be back in St John's, of course, but I may not go to the same service, at least for a while. I don't want people looking at me to see what my reaction is or coming to me asking all sorts of questions if something is different. It's only fair that my successor should do it his own way, without any kind of interference."



TRUST ME – I'M A SALESMAN



Mark Gandolfi

Parents are often quick to remind their kids never to chat with strangers in public, but what about the Internet? Thanks to today's technology, children can now meet and converse with strangers of all ages and nationalities with different behaviours and intentions. How can kids stay safe online? In this, the third and final part of his Well-Being series for *In Touch*, Dr Mark Gandolfi, Director of the St John's Counselling Service, gives a professional opinion on these and related issues that an increasing number of people are concerned about today. This is his report.



Aesop, the famous Greek writer and story teller, once said, "it is easy to be brave from a safe distance," and interestingly enough, we see this belief manifested today with those who go online with strangers and others from afar in the social networking world. Furthermore, the well-known fable Snow White has most of us remembering the famous line "mirror, mirror on the wall, who in the land is fairest of all?" which many would agree that looking at our self alone in a mirror is not enough to reply "it is I," but when others look at and comment on our Facebook "mirror" with likes and other positive comments we then feel we are the fairest of all.

Research today from numerous universities such as Cornell, University of Pittsburgh and Columbia Business School argue that social media sites such as Facebook and others may increase self-esteem with most, but the more concerning finding is how too much exposure with Facebook "mirrors on the internet wall" can possibly reduce our sense of self-control. This combined with our sense of bravado when afar from others on the internet can actually increase our risks for online harm. What are those harms we need to be aware of? The common harms that generate headlines in the news and fear in parents are well known: cyber bullying, online pornography, pedophiles, internet addiction and digital footprints (internet items you can never remove that can cause harm to your name and reputation). But the other harms have always been there and we need to ensure our children understand these and parents remain vigilant about them.

Dr Google did not go to medical school nor did he get a degree in history from the University of Toronto. NetCraft has estimated that there will be over 1 billion web sites children, teens and adults can click to, stay on and sometimes forever be influenced by. Some of us may remember the dotcom era (late 1990s) where we had over 2 million websites, and as the number of websites increased since then (not including web pages within those websites), we actually have billions of ways to get something wrong. In other words, unlike a newspaper or a journal article that goes through a validity check for its statements and facts, there is no "panel of authorities" validating what gets loaded up on the internet. For example, when you type in "marijuana is good for you" on a search engine there will be over 39,600,000 websites kids and teens can go to and read that marijuana is good for them. Having worked in healthcare for over 35 years (before the internet was ever around and since), I have yet to see any medical research that confirms marijuana is good for a teenage brain. But Dr Google will find 39 million voices to argue against their parents and me. Now I get why my favourite grandmother impressed upon me many times over "don't believe everything you read!" Thanks Granny.

I agree and so do many others that the internet has vastly improved our instinctual behaviours to socialise. Shy teens are finding other shy teens to make friends, we seek out long lost friends and rekindle a friendship, some internet users even discover a new love and live happily ever after and countless other positive online socialising stories. My kids use the internet to constantly reach out to me, tell me they miss me and love me and then end their emails with "send money papa!" The greater concern here (other than my wallet getting smaller) is what the internet world calls IID (internet identity) and how many individuals create a false identity online, or if you will, FIID. When CNN reported back in 2012 that over 83 million Facebook accounts are "fakes and dupes," that should have set off the scam alarm bells on computers worldwide. It didn't.

ReadWrite, a well-known tech news site, has looked at the reasons for fake internet identities, and not surprisingly, many kids and teens create fake identities to garner extra points and rewards with online games. Dishonest but clever and the harm is probably minimal except for the kid who was beaten in an online video game by the kid who cheated with his fake



identity. The greater concern was highlighted by a Canadian newspaper, the Star which reported that over half of Canadian teens had "assumed a fake identity or misrepresented their age online." Where the concern and fear grows is that large number of teens will share their account details and passwords with their online friends that greatly increases the risk for theft identity, cyber bullying, sexting, and stalking. Some of us may recall back in the day buying a fake college ID so we could go to a bar and try a beer or listen to a band. We often got caught with a poor quality fake ID or the smarter bartender simply did not believe that picture was really us and that was that. But faking our ID online is lightning fast, of high quality, can be hyperlinked to hundreds of fake websites that impress others Dr Google is really a cool guy who lives in Toronto with his aging grandmother, and the scariest of all, the fake ID could last for years and years.

I won't mislead or lie to you, I have relied on the internet to research information for personal and professional reasons and the profiles I have read on LinkedIn I usually believe are real people. Charles Perrault's classic Little Red Riding Hood in 1697 has been revised and retold many times over with the common theme of what you see may not be what it is. I still do not see the internet as the devil, or in Perrault's instance the big bad wolf, however, we now need more than ever to teach our children to not only be wary of strangers we meet in the woods, we need to be even more vigilant in cautioning our children with information they read on the internet and someone who meets them online.

Someone once said confront your fears and your fears won't be your fears anymore. We hope this article has not only given you one more fear to be aware of with the internet, but more importantly, by reading this article and then spending time with our children and teens on what they read online and who they hang out with online will one day reduce our fears into positive guidance and proactive care for our loved ones.

Editor's Note: The mission of the St John's Counselling Service is to empower the human spirit towards greater awareness in making choices for growth and happiness. More information about the service can be found on: www.sjcshk.com



MOVING ON

GEORGE AND SUSAN THOMAS

George and Susan Thomas are moving back home to Thiruvananthapuram, capital of Kerala, known as "God's own Country" for its natural beauty, and for St Thomas the Apostle founding one of the oldest Christian communities in the world. George organised two hugely successful pilgrimages for the Cathedral to Kerala and scores of St John's people were impressed and made happy by spiritual and social contact with his family roots.

St John's gave the couple "another place to worship His glory with all our hearts and minds," said George. "It gave us the opportunity to think aloud towards a universal church, tearing down man built boundaries within the Kingdom of God. In the grounds of St John's we found new believers practicing their faith in Christ more resolutely than we who claim pride of place, as born Christians."

St John's nourished them with its great liturgy, music, ministry and warm fellowship so George and Susan gave back their best through fund raising activities, fellowship meetings, the pilgrimages and chalice bearing. George was a sidesman and served for several years on the Council where he brought his frank and active approach to issues.

George wants to see St John's continuing to occupy its unique position in the city as a caregiver for all who approaches it – the "first port of call for anyone in dire need." Hong Kong will continue to be a second home. "Our children, who grew up here, are still linked to the city and that makes us happy and gives us a good reason to revisit."



JAMES DUNLAP



James Dunlap, full of good humour, history and Cantonese, came to St John's on his arrival in 1989 after calling in the Cathedral office to ask if they knew where the Eastern Orthodox congregation was. They did not but James liked what he saw of the place and stayed on – even after he discovered the Orthodox five years later. He was a dedicated and very knowledgeable choir member for 26 years, latterly the choir committee secretary and a Cathedral Council member for a spell in the 90s. He helped set up the Cecilia Kwok Music Church Scholarship Fund and ran the Michaelmas Fair Book Stall for the last two years. He retired from his legal work last year, his wife retired in April and his daughter Chloe has just graduated from secondary school. "The timing is perfect so we are going back to Vancouver according to plan," said James.

Married at St John's, with his children baptised here, he said, "I will miss the choir, the people and the preaching. The Dean has given me some helpful advice about Vancouver churches, including one where his younger brother is musical director and I shall be heading to the Anglican cathedral there which has a good choir."

ERIC AND STACEY USHER

Eric and Stacey Usher, stalwarts of Emmanuel Church, recently returned to Japan where Eric will take up a new teaching post in Tokyo. Eric and Stacey rarely missed Sunday worship at Emmanuel, and Eric ran a highly successful weekly Bible Study course for the community for 4-years.

Before their departure, a farewell dinner party was held in their honour at St John's during which Fr Nigel, on behalf of the community, presented the couple with a specially commissioned photo of Béthanie as a token of the community's love and good wishes. In a note to parishioners after the event, Eric and Stacey wrote, 'You all have been such a blessing in our lives during our time in Hong Kong. Thank you for all your support, prayers, friendship and kindness. Having lived in many places, we have each time been blessed by the love of our church family, and Emmanuel has most definitely been a place of great love and blessing. May God bless you with his grace and mercy.'



JAMES COLLINS



James Collins is a barrister who has probably dedicated more time than most to the pro bono obligations of his professional calling. At St John's, he was instrumental in setting up the Helpers for Domestic Helpers outreach in 1990 and has given his services to this very effective ministry, including membership of its committee, ever since. With his wife Marcela, he has now left the Cathedral for his native Wales after 31 years in Hong Kong. "We are going reluctantly," he said, "but health and retirement for us will be better managed there."

James has been a lesson reader for three decades, giving a lyrical Welsh lift to both Testaments, and a member of the Guild of Sidesmen, helping to keep, as he puts it, "orderliness and dignity which is one of the characteristics of Anglican worship." Marcela, who met and married James in St John's after she came here in 1986, was also a regular reader in English and Tagalog. She has been a leading light in the Filipina congregation and very much its voice on the Cathedral Council on which she sat for many years. She has been one of the warmest of Welcomers to the church and a leading provider of Li Hall refreshments on Sunday mornings.

They will both miss the Cathedral's music "profoundly" and all their friends. They have gone to their home in Llantwit Major in the Vale of Glamorgan and will be attending one of the oldest churches in Britain, St Illtud's, founded in the 6th century, with a building from the 11th century and known as the 'Westminster Abbey of Wales'.

THE DEAN'S MESSAGE



Dean Matthias with Mama Kate

As I write, I am flying back to Hong Kong after attending the 2015 International Deans' and Rectors' Conference held in Cape Town, South Africa. This year, the deans and rectors from the cathedrals and historical churches in the financial district of the international cities of New York, London, Sydney, Auckland, Hong Kong and Cape Town were in attendance. This was the tenth such gathering since the conference commenced a decade ago.

Between the wonderful time of fellowship (which gave us the opportunity to share news of the ministries and their challenges) and the tasting of the beautiful South African wine, Dean Michael Weeder of Cape Town did a profound job in sharing the pains and struggles of his country. We visited Robben Island, where President Nelson Mandela was imprisoned for 18 of the 29 years of his fight against the apartheid regime. The tour guide, an inmate himself for many years, explained how different treatments for food, labour work and the accommodations were assigned for no other reason than along racial lines. Seeing the tiny prison cell where Mandela was kept and the paper-thin cot he slept on after working all day under a blazing hot sun in the quarry mine, one could hardly imagine how anyone could survive such torturous existence for so long. And yet remarkably when released in 1990, instead of harbouring anger towards his aggressors, he called for peace and reconciliation. He said, "Courageous people are not afraid to forgive, for the sake of peace."

One vivid memory instilled powerfully in my mind was our visit to one of the townships. Back in 1960s, under the apartheid regime, blacks and coloured people were systematically uprooted and forced to relocate to these distant "townships". During our visit, I was appalled by the dire living conditions



in these communities. The one we visited was Khayelitsha, just outside of Cape Town, in which close to 400,000 people dwell in tin shanties with no running water. It is both sad and shocking that these makeshift slums have become the permanent homes for about 50% of the population in Cape Town and that though they have been around for at least 3-4 decades, yet little improvement has been made.

The home we visited belonged to a lady, people called her Mama Kate. For 20 years, she lived in one of those tin shanties. Fortunately, now she is able to live in a simple house. After her home was dismantled in the 1970s by the government, she took her young family to live in the forest where her young son eventually died. While still nursing her 3-month-old daughter, she and several dozen people went on a hunger strike for 29 days at the St George's Anglican Cathedral in Cape Town. Her heroic action forced the government to enter into a dialogue with them. St George's Cathedral, known by many as the People's Cathedral, stood courageously by the people, particularly under the prophetic role of Archbishop Desmond Tutu. During the difficult periods, the Cathedral was raided several times by the police to disperse and arrest the peaceful protestors; among those arrested was the dean.

When we asked Mama Kate, "You must carry a lot of resentment in you for all the mistreatment that you have suffered?" With a big smile she said, "No, I follow what the Lord's Prayer teaches: Forgive us as we forgive those who have sinned against us. It is only when we forgive we can have peace in our hearts." Maybe this was the secret why she looked so joyful and contented even though she suffered from such a travesty in her life.

One thing I noticed and greatly admired the several people that I met on this trip is the resilience of the South Africans. They have suffered profound injustice, poverty, discrimination, oppression, unfair treatment and suffering imposed by others and yet they have overcome darkness by the light, power and love of Christ. They seek peace and reconciliation instead of revenge.

Indeed, only in love and forgiveness from God, true peace, joy and harmony will come to light. In life, sadly we all have suffered one way or another from disrespect, mistreatment and undeserved suffering. How have these mishaps made us who we are today? If Mama Kate can overcome darkness, then we should also at least try. May God bless us and the people in South Africa.

Dean Matthias



From left: Dean Matthias, Rosemary and Revd Andrew Sempell, Rector of St James' Church, Sydney; Dean Michael Weeder of St George's Cathedral, Cape Town; Revd Helen Jacobi, Rector of St Matthew-in-the-City, Auckland; Revd Dr James Cooper, Founder of the Conference and former rector of Trinity, Wall Street; and Tay Cooper and Revd George Bush, Rector of St Mary-le-Bow, London

當我執筆寫今期之文章時，我正在飛機途中，從非洲返回香港。我剛參加完2015年度國際座堂主任牧師會議。今屆會議，來自座落於紐約、倫敦、悉尼、奧克蘭、香港與開普敦等金融中心之座堂和歷史性之教堂主任牧師雲集在南非開普敦市。自創會至今，已經是第十屆了！

在大會中，除了有機會分享各堂之事工和挑戰，並品嚐著名之南非美酒外，開普敦座堂牧師韋德更坦誠地分享他的國家多年來之困難與掙扎。我們去參觀羅賓島(Robben Island)。受人景仰之前南非總統孟德拉(Mandela)，在他因反抗種族歧視政策而被監禁之29年中，有18年在此孤島中渡過。當日的導遊，自己也曾是被監禁之囚犯，他向我們解釋，他們會因膚色有別而得到不同的待遇，包括食物、勞力工作與住宿的分配。我們去參觀孟德拉總統的細小監房，見到那像紙皮般薄之床褥。這是在烈日當空經過一天在石礦場工作後休息的地方。很難想像他當時是如何捱過這長期的煎熬。但奇妙的是當他在1990年被釋放時，他並沒有試圖討回公道，向欺壓他的人報復。他曾說：「有勇氣的人，為了追求和平，不會懼怕饒恕。」

今次其中一個令我印象深刻的是我們到「市鎮」(township) 探訪。早在1960年代，在種族歧視政策下，黑人和有色人種是有系統地被強制性遷徙到這些甚至遙遠之「市鎮」。當我們抵達時，那惡劣的生活環境令我感到震驚。我們走到Khayelitsha 市鎮，400,000人口居住在無食水供應的鐵皮屋內。更可悲的是，今日開普敦市有一半人正是活在這「困境」中，在過40年，情況鮮有改進。

我們探望的女士身邊的人叫她「凱特媽媽」。在1970年代，她所居住的房子被政府拆毀，她帶著年幼孩子惟有淪落在森林中居住。但因環境惡劣，兒子暴斃。之後她帶著三個月大的女兒與一群人在聖公會聖佐治座堂絕食抗議達29天之久。她勇敢的作為逼使政府開始與她們對話。聖佐治座堂享有「人民座堂」之美譽，因它與人民並肩作戰對抗種族歧視，尤指在那帶有先知作風之杜圖大主教之帶領之下。在最艱難的期間，該座堂多次遭受警察衝入去拘捕和平示威者。當時的座堂主任牧師，也曾被捉拿。

當我們問凱特媽媽「你飽受這麼多不公平的待遇，心中一定積聚不少怨恨？」她卻面帶微笑地說：「不會，我跟從主禱文所教導的饒恕我們，正如我們饒恕

得罪我們的人。是當我們肯去饒恕，我們才會心中有平安。」難怪，她雖然一生中受逼害，卻仍持有喜樂和滿足。

今次旅程中我對南非人的抗逆力大為敬佩。他們雖然受到種種不公義的對待；貧困、種族歧視、逼害和痛苦，但他們因耶穌的真光、大能與大愛會勝過黑暗。他們本可以去追求報復，但他們卻尋求和平和修和。

真的，惟有在上帝的大愛與饒恕中，真正的平安、喜樂和諧才會實現。在生命中，我們也難免會遇到某種的歧視、不被尊重和因不公平之待遇而經歷痛苦。這些人生的折磨又如何塑造今日的我們呢？若凱特媽媽可以勝過黑暗，那我們至少也要去嘗試。求主祝福南非並非我們大家。

謝子和
座堂主任牧師



ANZAC OBSERVANCE IN DISCOVERY BAY



Adrian King

An ANZAC commemoration, the first in Discovery Bay for many years, was held on the morning of 25th April. It was conceived and organised by Discovery Bay Churchwarden Natalia Veldman and the Revd Mark Rogers in cooperation with the management of Discovery Bay International School.

At 6:30am some 170 people gathered at the Flagstaff Lawn at Discovery Bay International School to participate in a traditional ANZAC Day Dawn Service. The fresh, open garden setting was evocative of many small town dawn parades traditionally held throughout Australia and New Zealand and the order of service followed the traditional solemn format.

Matt Corbett, Deputy Principal of the School who recalled that this uniquely Australasian tradition not only remembers the Gallipoli landings but also marks the birth of nationhood for Australia and New Zealand, gave the Welcome. Everyone then sang the well-known hymn 'Abide with me'.

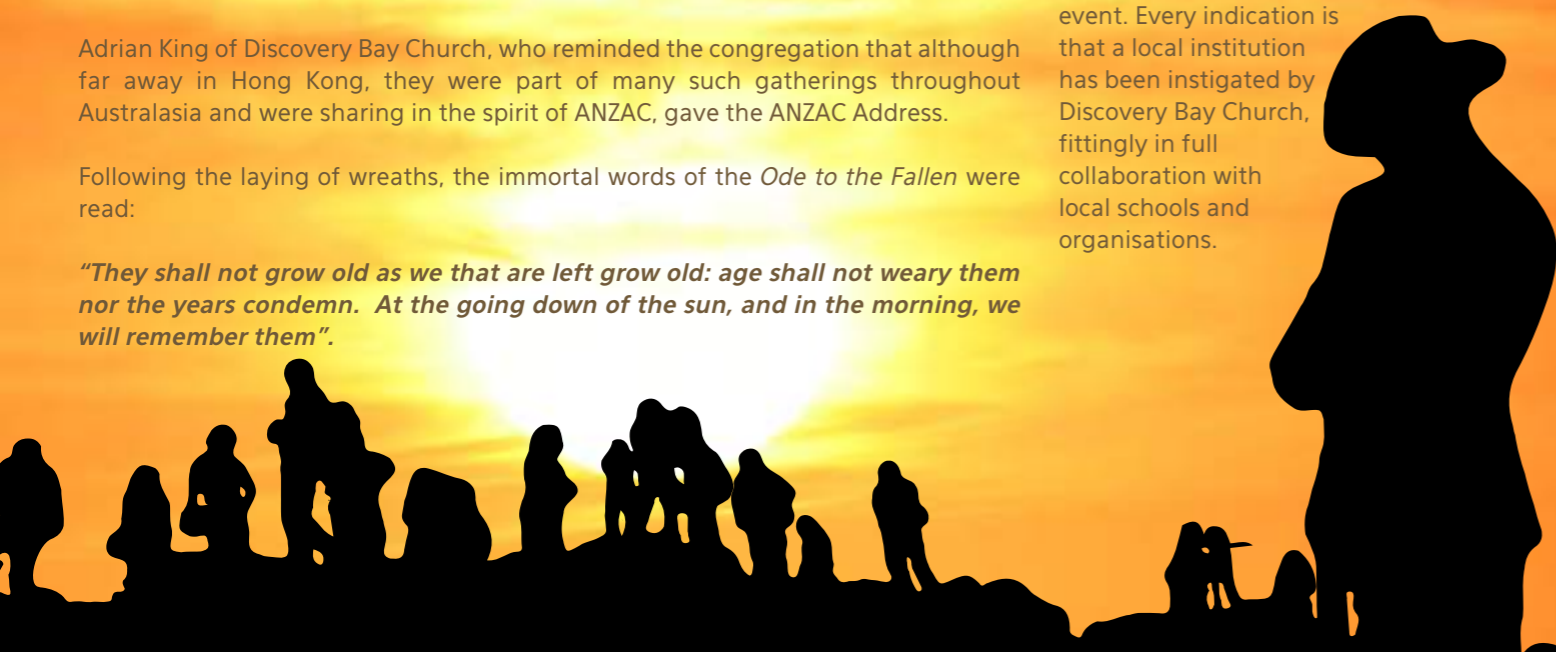
Adrian King of Discovery Bay Church, who reminded the congregation that although far away in Hong Kong, they were part of many such gatherings throughout Australasia and were sharing in the spirit of ANZAC, gave the ANZAC Address.

Following the laying of wreaths, the immortal words of the *Ode to the Fallen* were read:

"They shall not grow old as we that are left grow old: age shall not weary them nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun, and in the morning, we will remember them".

The bugler sounded the Last Post. There was the two minutes silence followed by Reveille and the flags of Australia, New Zealand and Hong Kong were raised. Then the plaintive wail of bagpipes filled the air. Fr Mark gave the Benediction and the ceremony closed with the singing of the Australian and New Zealand national anthems.

The large turnout showed the desire for a traditional act of remembrance by the large number of Australian and New Zealand families in Discovery Bay, and the intention is to make this an annual event. Every indication is that a local institution has been instigated by Discovery Bay Church, fittingly in full collaboration with local schools and organisations.



St John's Lectures 2015 A Shining Inauguration!

Giving an abundance of his time, energy, insight and good humour, the Very Revd Professor Martyn Percy, Dean of Christ Church, Oxford, came to Hong Kong to give the inaugural St John's Lectures, held in the Cathedral on 18th and 20th March. As Stuart Wolfendale reports, Martyn spoke with fluent confidence on two intricate issues facing today's Church and society.

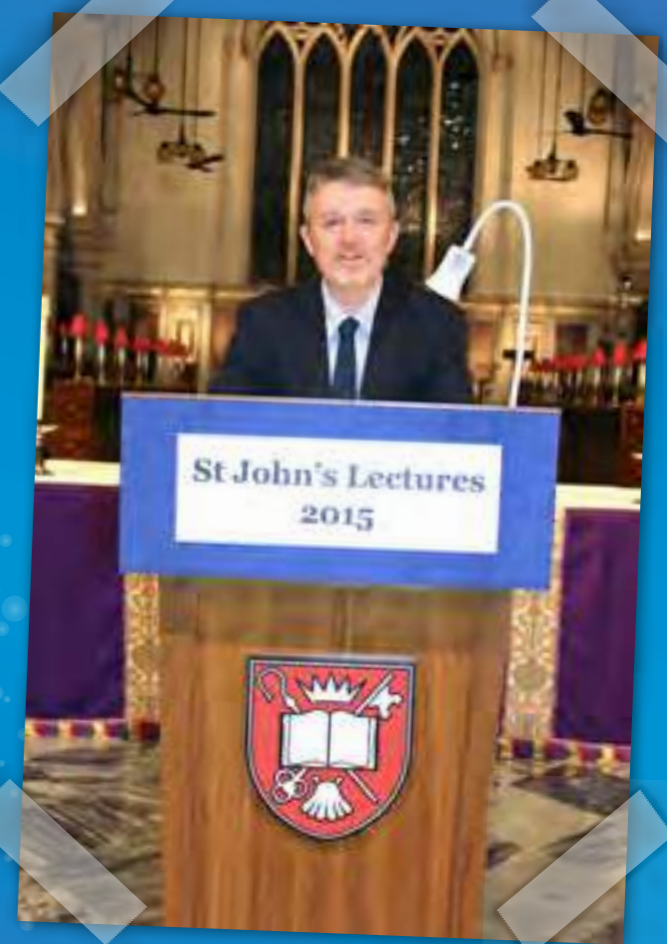
The Lectures were the first in what is intended to be an annual series of public lectures, when the Cathedral invites international speakers of note to come and talk about what they see as spiritual and ethical issues arising from their own professions and trends in the wider world. The aim of the Lectures is to be as public as possible and to attract interest from the city as a whole.

Professor Percy's first lecture was titled 'Fundamentalism - A Challenge to Church and Society'. He examined the history of the term, 'fundamentalist', the characteristics of fundamentalism and why it is important for churches and wider society to understand religious extremism as we reflect on our attempts at a shared community. His conclusion was simple and striking - 'Remember that love always wins though in the end; it really does.'

In his second address, 'Inclusive Churches and Societies - Problems, Possibilities, and Potential', Professor Percy asked whether, if fundamentalism is not an attractive proposition, inclusivity is really viable. Reminding his audience that the first churches were assemblies of 'non-citizens', a mix of people equal but different, he discussed how inclusive churches and societies can really be while at the same time discerning, keeping forever in mind that 'all are one in Christ'.

Martyn is a great friend of the Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui and a regular visitor to Hong Kong. He delivered the Lectures to appreciative audiences, extemporising with fluent confidence so that the printed text available later was only a general guide to his words. The vigorous Q&A sessions were continued afterwards when he mingled with the enthusiastic audience in the garden over refreshments.

During his visit, Professor Percy gave inspiring leadership at the Hong Kong Island Diocesan Clergy Retreat. He also preached at the Cathedral's Sung Eucharist and was a guest speaker on RTHK Radio 3's morning magazine programme.



PILGRIMAGE TO *ROME & ASSISI*

In June 2015, a group of 31 pilgrims gathered in Rome for a 10-day pilgrimage to some of the most sacred Christian sites in Lazio, Umbria and in the Marche. Many of the pilgrims had visited the Eternal City before but few had been to Assisi, and none to the smaller centres of Lanciano, Loreto or Manoppello. Organised and led by Fr Nigel Gibson, the aim of the pilgrimage was to provide spiritual growth through daily prayer, visit some world-renowned chapels and basilicas, and engage in theological and spiritual reflection. Prior to setting off, pilgrimage chaplain, Fr Robert Martin, had prepared a special *Pilgrimage Prayer Book* to be used whilst on the road or when visiting some shrines and chapels. This was an invaluable resource that did much to enhance daily prayers and worship on the journey. *In Touch* invited Fr Robert to share his thoughts on this first-ever St John's Pilgrimage to Italy in an article he calls *Travelling with the Saints*. We also sought reflections from some of the pilgrims themselves.



Travelling with the Saints

"Pilgrims are not tourists. They have come, quietly and humbly, to seek the holy and enter more deeply into God's presence."
Sister Wendy Beckett – Author and Art Historian

So with these thoughts in mind we gathered in Rome to start our pilgrimage, most of us coming from Hong Kong but some from the United Kingdom and the United States, as well. It had been nine months in the preparation but finally we met up in the Eternal City.

Rome has its own charm and fast moving energy. Lots of people, cars, scooters and police sirens are heard all the time. So it was indeed a great blessing that we stayed in a hotel just outside the city centre giving us a sense of peace and calmness. We went to bed on the first night well blessed by Fr Nigel and with a list of instructions for the next day. So started our pilgrimage.

On this first day of our pilgrimage the Sistine Chapel and Vatican museum were the first visits on our list. There is so

much to see in this huge complex and our wonderful guide, Alberto, briefed us thoroughly on the chapel and its paintings. The Sistine Chapel was different to what I had imagined, i.e. "the creation of Adam" didn't occupy a whole dome, but instead it was part of a long ceiling with many other paintings. Michelangelo painted the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel while lying on his back for four years! It is impressive beyond words, totally fascinating – one becoming a bit dizzy staring upwards, or claustrophobic with the masses of people in the same room.

We then moved into the Basilica of St Peter, the burial place of St Peter, with its famous square and the colonnade outside. As we wandered around the church it was perhaps not the exquisite works of art that were most impressive but the crowds of pilgrims from every part of the world who are drawn to this Mother Church of Latin Christianity.

We finished our church visits that day with a celebration of the Holy Eucharist by Fr Hugh Phillipson in All Saints' Anglican



The Pilgrims outside the Holy Door of St John Lateran Basilica, Rome



Holy Face of Manoppello



St Peter the Apostle

Church in the city centre, a welcome bit of Victorian gothic after the baroque of the Vatican. (The church, not Fr Hugh!)

Perhaps though, even after the glories of St Peter's, we weren't prepared for our afternoon visit to the Anglican Centre and the first of numerous surprises our leader Fr Nigel had arranged for us. The Anglican Centre is the home and office of the Archbishop of Canterbury's official representative to the Holy See. It's set in a wonderful Roman palazzo and is a centre of prayer, study and ecumenical exchange. Archbishop Sir David Moxon, the Director of the Centre, welcomed us and gave us much needed refreshments and a fascinating talk on the work of the Centre, current relations with the Roman Catholic Church and the joint project Anglican and Roman Catholics have started to help ease the plight of refugees trying to get into Europe.

After the talk we were taken by Archbishop David to visit the excavations under the villa which have unearthed what is thought to be the actual house of St Paul's captivity in Rome. This is a very recent excavation and it was a unique experience to be in a first century Roman house, let alone one which was the final home of the Apostle Paul.

The next day, along with Alberto our guide and Stefano our trusty driver, we were off early to see the Basilica of St Paul

outside the Walls and the Catacombs of St Sebastian. I think this is one of my favourite churches in Rome, a wonderful example of a Roman Basilica set in a beautiful courtyard. This is the traditional place of the martyrdom of St Paul and again we joined with pilgrims from across the world to honour the Apostle. Then off to the Catacombs of St Sebastian, the underground burial site of many early Christians, including the initial resting place of St Peter and St Paul. Here, there was a real sense of communion with our early brothers and sisters in the faith.

Another of Fr Nigel's surprises followed with lunch in a local restaurant which provided us with a roasted pig, Roman style, much to the delight of our Hong Kong pilgrims. Next came the Basilica of St John Lateran and the papal church of St Mary Major, with an unscheduled gelato bought by some of the more mischievous pilgrims!

The following day we moved on from the hustle and bustle of Rome to a small town in Abruzzo called Lanciano. The drive from Rome to Abruzzo was spectacular and we got to see for the first time just how beautiful the Italian countryside is. Lanciano is famous for an 8th century miracle. A monk who had doubts about the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist found that when he said the words of consecration at the

Mass the bread and wine turned into flesh and blood. The host is still preserved in the church. This is a difficult place for some to visit and for some doesn't fit easily within Anglican spirituality.

We were granted permission for Fr Nigel to celebrate a Eucharist in the Shrine and, whatever our thoughts about the relic might be, were united in our sense of the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. 'Thou art here we ask not how!'

Back to our hotel for a well-earned rest and swimming for the more sporty pilgrims in the hotel pool. (I myself offered a blessing to the swimmers and settled down with John Li for a cold beer!)

The next day was a Sunday, and as good Anglicans we went to church, but this time to the Parish Church of Manoppello, a small farming community. The church is also the Shrine of the Holy Face and it is believed to contain the veil used by Veronica to wipe the face of Jesus on the Way of the Cross. Tradition tells us that the imprint of his face was left on the veil. The image is quite beautiful and bears a striking resemblance to the image found on the Holy Shroud of Turin but to be honest the most moving part of the visit was to join in the Sunday Mass of the local community,

celebrated with such simplicity and reverence. (Perhaps we will cover with another veil Fr Nigel's fiery meeting with a rather fierce German nun?)

After his experience with the nun, Fr Nigel moved us on quickly to another surprise visit. This visit was to a local farm that produced olive oil and served lunch in a converted barn. We feasted on local produce, olive oil and wine and the ladies traded recipes with the farmer's wife who cooked our lunch. It was a real chance to chat to the local folk.

Next stop on our itinerary was Loreto a wonderful fortified town with massive outer walls. Loreto's most treasured possession is the Shrine of Our Lady, known as the Holy House of Nazareth, and believed to be a representation of the home of the boy Jesus in Nazareth. It is strange to see a small house/chapel, containing an image of the Blessed Virgin, within a large basilica. To understand this place and the Marian devotion offered there, one needs to see it as a shrine not just of Mary, but of the Incarnation. In Loreto we were close not only to Mother Mary but to her beloved Son, Jesus.

Our first sight of Assisi was from the lower town of Santa Maria degli Angeli, and I suspected from the start that Assisi would be the highlight of our pilgrimage. Assisi lay about 5km away





The magnificent hillside Basilica of St Francis of Assisi



A rare privilege: Fr Robert celebrates the Eucharist and Fr Nigel preaches in front of the tomb of St Francis in the crypt of the Basilica

on top of a large hill. It houses many churches and places of spiritual significance. Of course, our first visit in Assisi was to the Basilica of San Francesco, which consists of an upper and lower church, where the tomb of St Francis is housed. It was here that we were to celebrate our third Eucharist of the pilgrimage and Fr Nigel had arranged for us to be allowed to use the altar in front of the Tomb of St Francis. It was one of the high points of my priesthood to celebrate the Eucharist so close to the remains of a saint who has always been close to my heart. There was a wonderful meditative quietness in the chapel and Fr Nigel preached a homily which really summed up for all of us what the pilgrimage was all about – he told us that we were not travelling alone but watched over by St Peter and St Paul, Blessed Mary and now St Francis and St Clare. We were travelling with the Saints!

At the other end of Assisi we found the beautiful pink and white-stoned Basilica di Santa Chiara, (Church of St Clare), which houses her tomb. It is here that the famous crucifix which spoke to St Francis is kept and as we entered a group of Italian pilgrims were singing songs and praying. St Francis and St Clare shared a great spiritual bond and he held her in high regard.

We also undertook visits to other places associated with St Francis, such as Eremo delle Carceri, on the high slopes of Mount Subasio, about 4km from Assisi. We took a minibus but met other pilgrims who had walked from Assisi. This was St Francis' hermitage, a place where he would escape to pray. In the hermitage garden, many of us were deeply moved by a

simple bronze cast of the saint lying on the ground at the point of death. He had asked to be placed on the bare earth before he died. His simplicity and gospel devotion were inspiring.

Our last visit in Assisi was to where we started Santa Maria degli Angeli to visit the Basilica which houses the original small chapel of St Francis, the Porziuncola. It stands directly under the later-built Basilica's large dome. Dating from the 9th century, the long-abandoned little chapel was given to him by the Benedictines and became the early headquarters of the new Franciscan order, founded here in 1209. We arrived in a thunderstorm, and it rained and rained, so much that after visiting the church we had to stand in the portico for ages before we could get back to the coach. (Plenty of opportunity for me to chat to some lovely Franciscan sisters from Italy, Ghana and London.) The rain finally stopped and we made our way back to the coach and turning to look back at the Basilica we saw a double rainbow. It felt as if someone was giving us a final blessing on our pilgrimage!

We journeyed back to Rome for our last night full of thoughts and prayers, and thankful for blessings received. Back in Rome, Fr Nigel celebrated our last Eucharist in the hotel. Despite the service being in a conference room there was a real sense of gathering with angels and saints to give thanks for their fellowship and all the blessings we had received. After sharing our thoughts on the pilgrimage we sang together a funny song, specially written by the pilgrims to celebrate our time together. There was a real sense of fellowship, of journeying together and with the Saints who are our brothers and sisters.



St Francis' hermitage. No mystery why he often came to this peaceful place to pray and meditate



Watched over by St Francis and St Clare, Fr Nigel celebrates the Eucharist in the Basilica of Our Lady of the Bridge, Lanciano



In Bevagna, near Perugia, the Trapolini family, owners of the celebrated olive oil mill, Antico Frantoio Nunzi, served an unforgettable lunch. Olive oil will never be the same again!

I think I can speak for all the pilgrims if I say we felt it a great privilege to have been able to have walked in the footsteps of these great saints of the Church. There was a real sense of being blessed by their presence and learning more about them, their sacrifices, their strengths, their pain and hardships, and their resolute striving to be united with God. Their spirituality and their devotion knows of no divisions and labels; anyone irrespective of their denomination can feel greatly inspired and motivated by these great souls who are gifts from God to his Church.

So was it a tour or a pilgrimage? Well, the tourist sees sights, discovers new places, learns interesting facts, takes photographs and accumulates souvenirs. The tourist returns home the same person as the one who left, save perhaps for a broadened mind.

The pilgrim, on the other hand, gains insights and discerns new truths about oneself. The pilgrim travels with the expectation that the one who returns will not be the same person as the one who set out. We were certainly changed!

Robert Martin



The pilgrimage was beyond my expectations in every way, and that is no mean praise coming from a 'hard core' pilgrim! There was so much to see and learn and all of it was spiritually uplifting. Fr Nigel did a superb job managing everything and Fr Robert was a real asset to the team. And the fellowship among the pilgrims was just incredible. Well done, Father Nigel!

Mary Szeto

The Italy pilgrimage contained many memorable moments for me - daily prayer on the coach, a very special Holy Eucharist in front of the tomb of St Francis, Fr Nigel's 'surprises' on the journey, and even a double rainbow over the splendid church of Santa Maria degli Angeli in Assisi.

Wallace Lai

But perhaps what made the deepest impression was meeting the humble, staff-holding, unshaved walking pilgrim in Assisi whom we met three times at various points. When we said goodbye it had started to rain and he politely refused our offer to share our bus back to the city. His natural warmth and engaging smile remained as he unceremoniously continued his spiritual journey on Assisi's hallowed ground. He was a powerful witness who emanated genuine love and compassion.

The less touristic churches of Lazio, Umbria and the Marche were a joy with their instinctive blend of proportion, artistry and exquisite stonework against a startling blue sky.

The Anglican Centre in Rome left me inspired with its quiet, ongoing dialogue with the Vatican. Beneath the beautiful palace that houses the Centre we were treated to the almost conclusive news that we were standing in the location where St Paul was held in house arrest.

Most pilgrims do not have the chance to celebrate their own Mass at the tomb of St Francis of Assisi, nor to visit in silence his outdoor deathbed high in the hills above the city of Assisi.

Ruth Phillipson

It was Jesus who said: 'When two or three of you are gathered together in my name I am there in the midst of you.' Well, both Nelly & I believe that throughout this pilgrimage, with Fr Nigel at the helm guiding us with his extensive local knowledge, alongside Fr Robert's beautiful prayers, Jesus really was present among us. We both feel richly blessed to have been part of this journey to some of the most inspiring places in Christendom. This pilgrimage far exceeded our expectations.

Kenneth and Nelly Fung

All the roads I have taken to grow my faith have been bumpy, filled with sharp bends and many reversals. Fr Nigel's leadership on this pilgrimage, together with Fr Robert's liturgies, added a significant wealth of perspective on Christianity. It all helped my attempts to peel away imagery (often stunning) and marketing down the ages from the underlying core of belief. I have a long way to go but the amazing fellowship amongst the pilgrims moved me further forward than I could have expected. I had fun too, plus a surplus of 'unauthorised' food!

John Hamilton

On our first full day we followed in the footsteps of St Paul and visited the ongoing excavation of a house many believe belonged to St Luke, and almost certainly where St Paul was imprisoned and wrote 2 Timothy 2:9: 'I am...being chained like a criminal. But God's word is not chained.' The whole journey was a deeply moving experience that enriched our understanding of some of the most important people in the New Testament, notably St Peter and St Paul.

Overall, the beauty of the sacred sites, the spectacular landscape of the Abruzzi, morning prayers on the coach, four special Eucharists, and the delightful meals, filled us with gratitude. Blessings flowed daily, evident in the safety, unity, laughter and many surprises that kept us joyful throughout.

Miriam and Varkey Mathew

Before we entered the famous Sistine Chapel, our guide, Alberto, described to our group with genuine enthusiasm, the fascinating facts of the famous ceiling and altar and wall fresco The Last Judgment. Later in St Peter's Basilica, I was deeply moved by a piece of marble sculpture, Pietà, presenting Mary sorrowfully contemplating the dead body of her Son which she holds on her lap. These are just a few of Michelangelo's many great works. The devotion by this faithful artist of his whole life working tirelessly to manifest the glory of God is indeed humbling.

Margaret Sang

This pilgrimage was an unforgettable experience. Everyone I've met since we returned is full of praise and admiration for the organisation, the fellowship, the lovely 'surprise' lunches, and beautiful countryside and, of course, the sense of wonder and awe for the fascinating places of worship and historical towns we visited. Everything about this pilgrimage gave me a sense of true peace and holiness.

Alice Inglis

October Focus: Poverty Alleviation

A report by Mark Rogers



Hong Kong is one of the wealthiest cities in the world with hundreds of designer shops lining its shopping malls. Yet it is also a city with a high incidence of poverty. According to the 2013 Hong Kong government commission on poverty, 19.5% of the city's population can be classified as poor. One in three elderly people and one in five children are poor. Poverty is defined as a one-person household with less than \$3,600, or a two-person household with less than \$7,700 or a four-person household with less than \$14,300.

Recently the Cathedral Council wrote a new mission statement for the Cathedral's outreach. It states:

1) General aim: The overriding aim is to offer tangible help to the needy, to raise awareness of social issues, and to partner with others engaged in social outreach compatible with the mission statement. The help may be financial or in kind.

The programs will conform to the HKSKH Social Services policy statement: "As a church, we assume the role as prophet and the servant to uphold truth and justice, to be aware of the needs of our time, to alleviate adverse living conditions, to evangelise the good news, and to establish a just and harmonious society."

2) New Focus: In keeping with the St John's Ministry Focus, 2014-17, new programs will focus on serving the needy through poverty alleviation, mental health support and reconciliation of peoples. The focus will be subject to regular reviews in order to address the immediate needs in Hong Kong.

A poverty alleviation task group has been laying the foundation for a new cathedral outreach. But is there poverty in and around the cathedral? The task group met with Pang Kit-Ling, District Social Welfare Officer. She informed the group that there is indeed local poverty, and in the Western District there are pockets of poverty:

1) In particular amongst the old buildings, some of which contain subdivided units, and in two housing estates.

2) There is some gentrification, especially along the new MTR extension route. Some buildings are being renovated and sold for higher prices. Low-income residents are moving out, (being 'forced' out).

In particular there are two areas of concern as regards to poverty:

- (a) Elderly confined to homes.
- (b) Children in low-income families, including subdivided flats who are living in cramped conditions that hold back their development and education.

The task group presented recommendations to the Dean and clergy. In response the Dean and clergy have decided that October will be Poverty Alleviation Month. Each Sunday service will focus on a different aspect of poverty. At the 6 pm service there will be guest speakers from local NGOs and other churches engaged in poverty alleviation. Alongside the services there will be opportunities for members of the cathedral to volunteer in poverty alleviation programs.

According to Luke's Gospel, when Jesus began his ministry, he said these were his priorities:

'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.' (Luke 4:18-19)

In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." (Matthew 25:40)

When we service the poor we are serving Christ.



Editor's Note: Mark Rogers (above) is a Cathedral Chaplain and Priest-in-Charge of Discovery Bay Church.

John Kater reviews for *In Touch* Samuel Wells' book **BE NOT AFRAID: FACING FEAR WITH FAITH**

Brazos Press, 2011
ISBN 978-1-587-43302-3

This is an amazing book. And it is not a book for the fainthearted.



Samuel Wells is a good friend of St John's Cathedral and of the HKSCH. Although he is now vicar of St Martin-in-the-Fields in London, for seven years he was Chaplain at Duke University, in the southern American state of North Carolina. This book was published before his return to England and many of the stories he tells and the references he makes are drawn from and reflect southern American culture and folkways. As a southern American myself, I find those illustrations especially appealing, but the points he

makes with them are universal in their application. You don't have to be an American southerner to benefit from it!

I say this book is not for the fainthearted because Sam Wells has an amazingly keen perception of the human condition. He writes for the broadest possible audience. Sometimes he seems to be speaking to the students who made up his congregation at Duke, but then he's addressing people caught up in high-powered work settings; at other times it's a couple struggling with their marriage, facing a terminal illness or the loss of a job or grieving the death of a child or a parent. But whoever happens to be his primary audience at the moment, it's as if he is looking directly at the reader and seeing into our heart: our questions, our confusions, our hurts, our mistakes, our hopes, and above all our fears. I'm not used to reading a book and feeling as if the author knows me through and through -- including the parts I don't like very much or try to keep well buried, and certainly don't expect anybody else to notice. But anyone willing to put his or her own soul under the bright light Sam Wells shines on it will find a deeply rewarding, perhaps even life-changing experience.

The book is a deceptively easy read; there is very little theological language to send us to the dictionary, and it contains a total of thirty-one "reflections," some as short as a page or two and none longer than seven pages. In his Introduction, Dr. Wells observes, "Each reflection is designed to speak to gut, head, heart, and hand -- often in that order." He tells us that, "When I seek to assist others in meeting God in Christ, I begin with the gut." (p. xiii) The reflections are organised around six of the most basic fears that intrude on our life with God and our neighbour: the fear of death, of weakness, of power, of difference, of faith and of life. Most of us, of course, don't like to admit we're afraid, but Wells believes that the six fears he writes about are "a fair selection of the kinds of questions Christians are sometimes reluctant to face head-on." (p. xix) So he invites us to do just that: to admit that we are fearful, so that we can encounter the healing and strengthening love of God that helps us to move beyond our fear. But he implicitly warns us that we won't achieve the faith we long for unless we face our fears and bring them to the light of the gospel.

I don't know of another book that begins with a chapter called "How to Die." Nor do I often come across a book that admits that often our prayers for healing are fulfilled in a way different from

the one we hope for. And Wells has no use for the kind of gospel that assumes that "church...is about making friends, feeling spiritual, and offering service." Rather, the gospel invites us to be prepared to "go to the cross." "For us," he writes, that may mean being humiliated and defamed in newspapers, blogs and radio stations. It may mean losing our jobs, and we and those who love us becoming the object of scorn and derision. It may mean being subject to violence against our person, property, and loved ones. It may mean imprisonment, or restrictions on travel, speech, or education. This is what happens to people when they spend their lives devoted to reconciliation, healing, truth and Jesus.

We don't want that gospel. (pp. 25-26)

That might sound like bad news rather than good news; but a few pages further on, he writes: "We're all going to die. But God isn't. That's the point. Your life has no meaning, no purpose, no lasting significance, except in this: God has made you God's precious beloved, God has shaped God's identity around you, God is with you in fire and rain, and you will live forever as a song to God's glory." That's my only hope. And that is enough. (p.33)

Indeed, that brief summary really captures Sam Wells' basic stance: the most important thing about us is that we are God's beloved children and that God will never, ever leave us alone.

Having invited the reader to face the fear of death that haunts us all, he turns his attention to other fears that take their toll on the human soul. Most of us like to project an image of strength, an attitude that we can handle anything that comes our way; Wells knows better, and invites us to examine our fear of weakness. At the same time, many of us also fear power -- our own and others'. We live in a time when authority is deeply shaken, and yet we also hunger for the ability to "make things happen." Exploring our fear of power leads Wells to ask questions like: What kind of leadership is appropriate for Christians? What does it mean to give with our head, our hands and our heart to those in need? Is there a gospel for the rich? (That is actually the title of Reflection 14!) What do we really want from life?

And so it goes throughout the book: tackling our fear of difference leads to observations about racism, wondering if we can still call God "Father", thinking about AIDS, and the nature of real peace. And the last two fears to be discussed are the fear of faith and the fear of life, in which Sam Wells explores what it means to live a fully human life as God's beloved child.

When I came to the end of the volume I felt very much as if I'd been at a very challenging and deeply rewarding retreat. I am more grateful than I can say for the opportunity to spend this time with someone who fearlessly holds up the light of Christ and shines it where we need it most.



30 Years Of Service Excellence



From left: Wendy Larkin, Ah Wah, Lucy Ching and Paul Clasper

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the St John's Cathedral Bookstore since its official launch on Valentine's Day 1985. To mark this milestone, In Touch invited co-founder Wendy Larkin to look back and reminisce about the store's humble beginnings. Once established, says Wendy, it didn't take long before it became a friendly hub and meeting place within the church grounds - a function it fulfils to this day.

In 1983 my friend Jay Green and I inaugurated a religious bookshop within the precincts of St John's in what was known then as the Old Hall, underneath the staircase which in those days led up to the Dean's Office. On my first visit to St John's in July 1982 for the Sunday Eucharist I had gone into the Old Hall and met Jay in front of a small table run by Sue Martin, who had a range of bibles and a few autobiographies. I said I was interested in doing something in that line and Sue was only too willing to pass it over to Jay and I later that year.

With a small grant from the Cathedral, Jay and I cornered off an unused area in the hall with some whirly stands obtained from fire stock and two low bookcases lent to us by Dean Paul Clasper and his wife Janet, with which we cornered off an area opposite the door leading to the Cathedral porch. We then scoured other Christian bookshops and the Bible Society for an initial supply, hoping for a discount so that we could make a profit to purchase future stock. The only chore in this was the need to put all items away in the adjoining cupboard under the stairs when we were not trading.

At first we opened only on Tuesdays and Thursdays and after the 9.30am Sunday Eucharist. Dean Clasper, being an author, was keen for us to sell his books and was very much in favour of the shop, which he named Bookstore - in the American way!

By 1985 it had proved so successful that the Cathedral built a temporary shop around us with a lockable door and shutters. The St John's Cathedral Bookstore was officially opened on 14th February 1985 by one of Hong Kong's author's, Lucy Ching, accompanied by her faithful amah, Ah Wah. Her book, *One of the Lucky Ones*, was one of the first biographies that we stocked. I was then granted a small but regular honorarium as Manager and a Bookstore Committee was appointed with the Revd Erik Kvan as Chairman.

As our confidence and sales increased, we were given a God-given supply of 600 beautiful cheongsam dresses by the HK CLARES to sell. With this income we bought dress rails, a proper till instead of a tin box, some upright bookcases plus suitable china and a coffee machine and served coffee on neat little tables to succour those who drifted in from lack of company, exhaustion from the unrelenting heat or just a friendly chat. We were also given a couple of office chairs and low filing cabinets, bankrupt stock from one member of the congregation, which we also used as a display stand in the middle of the shop. So, we became a friendly hub within the grounds.

In this way we built up not only a shop but also a meeting place and outreach which became as much, if not more important, than book sales. This was particularly important for Jay who was taking a counselling course. We took steps also to get direct supplies from the UK at cost and negotiated transport. We had to consider the ever-changing exchange rate when marking up and how to keep track of sales and stock, which at that time was all done manually. We increased the opening times to every day of the week



June Li welcomes Lucy Ching at the opening ceremony

and Sundays after the 9.30am Eucharist. Thursdays after clergy breakfast were always our busiest time as we expanded our stock to include wafers and paschal candles, prayer cards, posters and religiously connected cards and other items that the clergy needed to order separately for their own churches.

We took on more voluntary staff including at least one person from the Cathedral's daughter churches. Sue Blakely represented the Cathedral, Elspeth Pelling from St Stephen's and Usha Casewell from Emmanuel all came to help one day a week and took a stock of books on sale or return basis to their own churches. Alice Inglis came, stayed to help, and has always been a strong support to the managers appointed ever since.

I relinquished the managerial position in 1989 to pursue a position in a dance school until I returned to the UK in 1995. Jay Green and Sue Blakely continued to run the Bookstore until Vanda Cole was appointed as the first paid manager in 1992. Jay kept the accounts until she relocated to the UK in 1993.

Maundy Thursday Concelebration

United in Prayer: The annual Service of Blessing of Oils, Renewal of Ordination Vows and Holy Eucharist on Maundy Thursday is one of the few occasions in the year when Archbishop Dr Paul Kwong, surrounded by his clergy at the High Altar in St John's, can visibly demonstrate their prayerful unity. As in previous years, all priests of the Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui were invited to concelebrate. After being blessed by the Archbishop, the holy oils are used throughout the Province for the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Orders, and in ministry with the sick. The special service also celebrates the institution of the priesthood.



For 166 years St John's Cathedral has been a place of holiness and of prayer in the heart of Hong Kong. On the 28th February 2015 it also became a place of pilgrimage for hundreds of people from around the diocese. The Dean and clergy welcomed the pilgrims, who were given an insight into the colourful history not only of the building but also its people. There was also ample time for quiet prayer and reflection as the visitors were guided quietly around the church. For many it was their first look inside St John's and after enjoying fellowship and refreshments in the Li Hall, the pilgrimage ended with Choral Evensong attended by Archbishop Dr Paul Kwong.

Pilgrimage to St John's



CMP – Who are we?

The Company of Mission Priests came into being in the early days of World War II. Sponsored by three Anglican Religious Communities and the Archbishop of Canterbury, its original purpose was to provide priests to care for parishes especially in areas of poverty and deprivation. So these Mission Priests would have to be unmarried and willing to share accommodation, income and expenditure. This was exactly what happened. After the war CMP priests both in teams and individually served with distinction in some of the most needy areas in Britain, and also overseas in Guyana, Madagascar, and now Hong Kong and elsewhere.

The Company is a dispersed religious community of Anglican priests who live to a rule in order to be free to focus their whole lives on the mission of the Church. Members express their common life through simple vows renewed each year, attendance at General Chapter each May. They also participate in a Regional Chapter and share in the fellowship of prayer.

The Company draws inspiration from the life of St Vincent de Paul who renewed the French Church of the seventeenth century through care for the poor and thorough formation of the clergy. Members of the Company therefore attend closely to their own ongoing formation as priests in order best to serve God's.

Fr Robert has been a professed member of community for 15 years and was recently in England to attend the General Chapter.



Fr Robert Martin, CMP, with the recently consecrated Bishop of Burnley, the Right Revd Philip North, CMP.



Emmanuel's priest-in-charge, Fr Nigel Gibson, returned recently to his former Diocese in Europe as guest preacher at St George's Church, Berlin.

His own priest's warden, Wallace Lai, who was working in the city at the time, supported him at the Sung Eucharist, which was celebrated by St George's chaplain, Fr Christopher Jage-Bowler (centre).

Anglicans have worshipped in Berlin since the 1830s and St George's continues to be one of the most vibrant Church of England chaplaincies in Europe.



ON THE HORIZON

Below is a snapshot of known upcoming events at the time of going to press. Unless stated otherwise, all events will be held in St John's. Further details of these and other activities will be published in the pew sheet and on the website.

www.stjohnscathedral.org.hk

6 August, Thursday

19:30 Sung Eucharist: Transfiguration of our Lord

9 August, Sunday

18:30 Fresh Expressions Service: Holidays

15 August, Saturday

19:30 Sung Eucharist: Assumption of the BVM

23 August, Sunday

09:00 Sung Eucharist: St Bartholomew (transferred) RTHK broadcast
Michaelmas Fair Charity Run at Pure Fitness

24 August, Monday

Copy deadline for *In Touch* autumn edition

26-27 August, Wednesday & Thursday

Proposed Clergy Retreat

28 August, Friday

HIV Centre Awards Night – Li Hall

29 August, Saturday

09:00 – 12:00 Provincial Education Day

31 August, Monday

19:00 'Genesis' Course begins

5 September, Saturday

16:00 'I Believe' Course begins

13 September, Sunday

18:00 Fresh Expressions Service: Songs of Praise

18 September, Friday

HIV Centre Art Exhibition

20 September, Sunday

09:00 St John's Dedication Festival

26 September, Saturday

10:00 – 14:00 CLARES Designer Sale

27 September, Sunday

St John's Harvest Thanksgiving Services

28 September, Monday

Mid Autumn Festival: Public Holiday

1 October, Thursday

National Day: Public Holiday

4 October, Sunday

09:00 Sung Eucharist: RTHK broadcast
11:45 St Francis' Day: Blessings of Animals

11 October, Sunday

10:00 Fresh Expressions Service: 'Edith Cavell'

16-17 October, Friday & Saturday

Bookstore Charity Card Fair, Li Hall

17 October, Saturday

18:00 Ordination Service

18-20 October, Sunday - Tuesday

Diocesan Synod

21 October, Wednesday

Chung Yeung Festival: Public Holiday

25 October, Sunday

Michaelmas Fair Pre-Sale Event

31 October, Saturday

10:00 – 16:00 Michaelmas Fair



On 2nd June 2015, **ELSIE TU, GBM, CBE**, celebrated her 102nd Birthday! And so it was that with potted Orchid and chocolate truffles in hand – tokens of esteem and affection from the St John's Cathedral community – I was among the first to visit her on the day at her home in Kwai Chung. Elsie lives in the Supervisor's flat, situated within the Mu Kuang English School, which was founded by her late husband Andrew Tu (d. 2001), the school's first Principal in 1955. As Supervisor of the school she has been instrumental, together with Andrew, in providing quality education to the children of the economically disadvantaged. Furthermore, her active financial support to Mu Kuang students of low-income families has ensured an education is available to all, regardless of socio-economic status.

"Born Elsie Hume, in 1913, in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England, she graduated from the University of Newcastle in 1937, worked as a school teacher in Halifax until 1947, when, newly married, she and William ("Bill") Elliot, her first husband, were called to serve as missionaries in mainland China. In 1951 they moved to Hong Kong, where Elsie became disenchanted with her husband's extreme Protestant faith and the refusal of the Plymouth Brethren to become involved in social issues. She parted from Mr Elliot and left their church, and became a respected voice for social justice, fighting for the rights of the underprivileged and against corruption in Hong Kong. In 1963 Elsie became an Urban Council member, married Andrew Tu in 1985 and in 1988 a Legislative Council member. She received the Ramon Magsaysay Award -- the 'Nobel Prize of Asia' from the Philippines in 1976, and numerous honorary doctorates -- from universities in Hong Kong and Britain, including one in Social Sciences from the OUHK in 1994." (Attributed to the OUHK website).

'I am sure there is no real happiness in life except in service to the community. The greatest reward has been on the faces of the people who were helped.' *Crusade for Justice: An Autobiography Elsie Elliot (1981)*

Hong Kong's most widely admired personality. (Opinion Poll 1993)

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Cathedral Chaplains

The Revd Desmond Cox

The Revd Dwight dela Torre

The Revd Peter Koon

The Revd Robert Martin

The Revd Nigel Gibson

(Chaplain and Priest-in-Charge of Emmanuel Church—2523 4157)

The Revd Will Newman

(Chaplain and Priest-in-Charge of St Stephen's Chapel—2813 0408)

The Revd Mark Rogers

(Chaplain and Priest-in-Charge of Discovery Bay Church—2987 4210)

The Revd Catherine Graham

(Chaplain and Anglican Communion Refugee and Migrant Network Coordinator)

The Revd Wu Wai Ho

Cathedral Honorary Chaplains

The Revd John Chynchen

The Revd Hugh Phillipson

The Revd Philip Wickeri

The Revd Jenny Wong Nam

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