

“CHOOSE LIFE”

PARISH & PEOPLE has sent to your Deanery its last message to the Church. Ask to see a copy, or go to our website at www.parishandpeople.org.uk. In summary it says:

CHANGES for RENEWAL

Worship For many churches the Eucharist is the only form of worship. Is this really the best we can do for those who have little or no church connection?

Communication We are often represented by the media as a divided & dying disaster! What are we actually communicating to the world around us? A vital element in good communication is listening.

Ordained Ministry We are now being called to “re-imagine ministry”. This cannot include just those who are ordained.

Agenda Deanery Synods pay too little attention to helping the local churches to work better. We often get bogged down with formal agendas covering irrelevant subjects, and then wonder why most people are reluctant to stand for election!

Unity is not the same as uniformity. The church needs to exist in a huge variety of forms. (Catholic, Charismatic, Fresh Expression, Messy Church & many others!)

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Jesus spoke of the Kingdom 119 times in the Gospels - of the Church only 3 times! We emphasise the church too much. The Kingdom of God is concerned with the whole of living, not propping up churchy religion.

THE MINISTRY OF THE WHOLE PEOPLE OF GOD

EVERY Christian (not just clergy) is called to minister. There should be no attempt to turn laity into “mini clergy”. Some indeed will be trained & authorised to do work in a parish church, but for the majority their ministry is out in the community & at work.

TAKING OTHER PEOPLE’S SPIRITUALITY SERIOUSLY - ‘Feed My Sheep’

We are all called to nourish others on their spiritual journey, helping them find their way into a trusting relationship with God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, starting from where they are – not where we would like them to be.

WHO (OR WHAT) DO WE CHRISTIANS THINK WE ARE ?

Christendom was the idea that the whole world would be ruled by Christians. That idea has sunk!

Now the challenge is how do we cope with living in the ‘lifeboats’ ?

- The ordained can longer control everything!
- Congregations should seek to support Christians in everyday life.
- Individuals need to be set free from nostalgically worrying about the survival of the Church as it used to be.
- How people relate to each other is the key - not structures and committees.
- We remember that we “see through a glass darkly”.

Deanery Exchange

Used it in 2010 ? Lose it in 2020 ??

Did you vote for your General Synod candidates in 2010? Many Deanery Synod members did not - largely because they did not know them from Eve or Adam. The result: a House of Laity which did not represent the views of the CofE at large. In November the General Synod debates a proposal for an Electoral College in 2020 made up of parishioners ‘too busy’ to serve on Deanery Synods, elected either by the PCC or at their APCM.

A recent national survey of Deanery Lay Chairs endorsed the view that **‘To remove the responsibility for electing members of the GS could reduce Deaneries’ legitimacy and make them an easy target for cut backs in cost and bureaucracy.’** The survey results suggest this “might be a step we would come to regret”. Deaneries are playing an important role in mission and in supporting parishes, in making decisions about local resources and discussing local issues. To take just one instance: they are essential so that parishes can together respond to the Archbishop’s challenge to promote and operate credit unions in their area.

Tell your GS members what you think, or email the Chair of the GS Business Committee admin@dorchester-abbey.org.uk

Electronic future for DX: After over 35 years, this is your last printed Deanery Exchange. From Spring 2014 DX will be emailed free to all deaneries in England and Wales through the National Deaneries Network. Peter Croft edited/compiled DX until the late 1980s when Peter Bates took over the task. He will carry it on, so please do send Deanery minutes to peter@bateshouse.freeseve.co.uk or add his email to your list for deanery publications so that he can include items of mutual interest in future issues. Personal snippets will also be very welcome. Send your email to him so as to get your personal copy of DX.

National Deaneries Network (NDN) is planning the next National Deaneries Conference for Friday 3 to Sunday 5 October 2014 at The Hayes, Swanwick in Derbyshire. Watch out for details in the Spring - your deanery will receive them in a mailing to all deaneries, but to find them for yourself go to www.chdg.org.uk where you will also find the latest DX from next Spring. Please plan on sending one or two people from your deanery to the conference - it is always a very valuable and worthwhile weekend. To share your own thoughts and comments on the deanery with others through NDN send an email to webmaster@chdg.org.uk

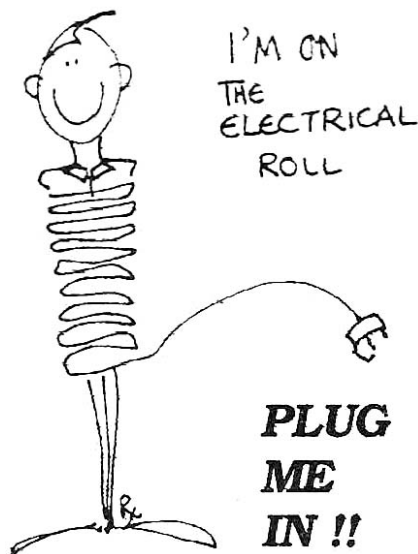
NB : A LARGE PRINT version of ‘Deanery Exchange’ is available on the P&P web site.

Parish Spotlights: Several dioceses have put these on line. In a very user-friendly and visual format they put together the results of the 2011 Census focused on each parish with its own 'Annual Statistics for Mission.' Use them in a parish forum or PCC to identify what needs your parish might serve. (Google for 'Parish Spotlights')

'Living Faithfully: following Christ in Everyday Life' [SPCK £9.99] - The Bishop of Oxford's latest book echoes Parish & People's message that there is too much talk about getting lay people to do more churchy things, instead of finding answers to how to follow Christ every day of the week - and all in his easy, amusing and readable style. Each chapter is set out for study - in a house group next Lent ?

This Time Tomorrow (TTT): Salford DS heard that in one parish TTT is a series of short talks when different people talk about what's happening in their life. It helps members of the congregation to get to know each other - sounds to be a good idea. The same parish defined an essential part of Good Practice to be a readiness to abandon ideas that seem good at first, but don't work in practice.

Sparkenhoe East DS (Leicester Diocese) heard a presentation on 'Church and Society' in which it was suggested that "church" and "society" are not two separate entities that need to be merely melded together, but two entities that should be fully integrated. It was also suggested that we should be marketing our churches better, not selling them. Marketing is different from Selling. The marketer finds



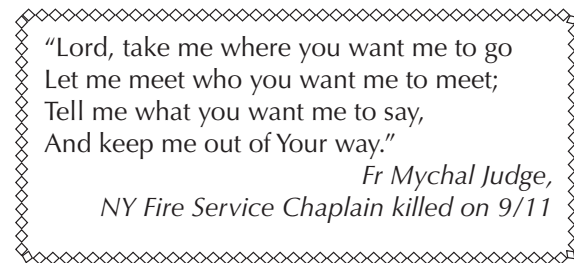
out what people want and then meets their needs. Every year churches have a huge opportunity to meet with many people who only come to church occasionally (baptisms, weddings and funerals) and we need to find out what these ordinary people want from their church.

Historically the church was at the centre of the community and was the place where council meetings, markets, etc. were held. The speaker advocated that we need to love the people in the parish with actions not just words, and that in return the people will see that the church is adding value to the community and will support it. We need to define the God of the ordinary to the ordinary people. DS members were reminded that: "When the flowers begin to open you don't have to tell the bees to come!"

Anniversaries in 2014 - On 25 January 2014 it will be 70 years since the Rev Dr Florence Li Tim-Oi was priested in China. The landmark will be celebrated in St Martin-in-the-Fields at 11am. The celebrant will be the granddaughter of the Bishop who ordained Li Tim-Oi - the Rev Frances Shoemith. The preacher is to be Canon Dr Edidah-Mary Mujinyah, MU President of Uganda - one of the first of the 385 'Daughters of Li Tim-Oi' whose training was funded by the Li Tim-Oi Foundation - www.ittakesonewoman.org.

The 20th Anniversary in 2014 of the first CofE women priests is being marked in several cathedrals, with provincial celebrations in St Paul's Cathedral London on 3 May and York Minster on 17 May.

Inflatable Church for hire - just one of the resources available from ARC (the Arthur Rank Centre). They provide a great service for country churches and deaneries, including the regular journal *Country Way* and resources for rural Messy Churches. One programme being run by ARC is CLiRC (Creative Leadership in the Rural Church), For details go to www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk or telephone 024 7685 3060.



"Share your contractors!" In DX70 (Autumn 2012) we reported Southampton DS's exploration of 'Dreaming the Dream', including parish suggestions of ways to explore and fulfil their dreams. Emerging ideas include the sharing of expertise and experience in applying for Community and Heritage Lottery grants, sharing of

equipment, shared creative workshops (eg flower arranging, puppets and drama), and the very practical suggestion of sharing good experience of contractors. If your parish has a job done well, and at a good price, by a reliable and trusted contractor, then share the details with your neighbouring parishes, and perhaps the neighbouring deaneries. Good news deserves to be shared.

Recycling (continued) - Considerable funds are being generated from recycling books through the agencies detailed in DX 71, together with assisting Christian Aid to raise funds. Another group that buys used CDs, DVDs etc. is *musicmagpie*. Find them in your search engine.

Moving On

With this final Deanery Resource Unit mailing, the members of the **PARISH & PEOPLE** team pass their responsibility for resourcing deaneries to the National Deaneries Network.

The papers which make up this mailing, with all recent P&P publications, are now available on the P&P web site: www.parishandpeople.org.uk. Username is *subscriber*, and this year's password is *Revelation3v6*.

You will be contacted later by email about future resources for Deaneries. Please make sure we have your address by sending a blank email headed 'Deaneries' to subs@parishandpeople.org.uk.

Meanwhile please continue to send your synod minutes and papers to Peter Bates, the current editor of 'Deanery Exchange', dx@parishandpeople.org.uk or peter@bateshouse.freemove.co.uk Tel 01273 493172

Password-protection on the P&P web site will cease from December 2013 and all deanery resources will also be accessible directly from the National Deaneries Network web site, www.chdg.org.uk.

'Feed My Sheep': An extended reflection on these issues by John Cole, will appear shortly on the P&P web site: www.parishandpeople.org.uk