

Your Letters...

Ordained Local Ministry - the Synod debate

I fear that the report on the March Diocesan Synod in the April edition of The Bridge, was too short to do justice to the debate that took place on my Following Motion to Bishop Tom's presentation concerning the OLMs

The concerns about the ending of the OLM, which I and most of the other speakers in the debate raised, relate to the special nature of 'local ministry' especially in inner city/urban parishes.

The fact that the statistics show that the number of applicants for training from inner city/urban parishes has been falling in recent years (possibly as result of the OLM

course becoming a degree course) is, in my view, a major worry for the future rather than a justification for the managerial decision to end the OLM scheme and continue only with the NSM training scheme through SEITE.

We must not lose sight of the fact that the OLM Scheme in Southwark, which has been extraordinarily successful, was founded in direct response to the Faith in the City Report published in 1985.

We are all, I believe, pleased that the report on the Church in Urban Areas has been published. I am pleased that Archdeacon Christine has given an undertaking that Synod will be able to review and debate the issue of mission and ministry in urban areas within the next year. (This was in response to my 7th sub clause which was not put forward for debate). I am also of course looking forward to

the review of the new NSM/SEITE arrangements after 2 and 4 years, as agreed by Synod.

I am also pleased that Bishop Tom stated that the Ministry and Training Committee has already decided that, in some circumstances, newly ordained NSMs may serve their title in their home parish and that there will be no change for exiting OLMs and OLMs in training, if they don't want it.

My final point is a technical one. Your report in The Bridge said that 'the proposals outlined by Bishop Tom were agreed' by Synod. As the minutes show, this was not the case because Bishop Tom was not seeking the agreement of Synod via his presentation but informing Synod of what he had decided in consultation with the Bishops Council and the Ministry and Training Committee. I, for one, would have preferred that Bishop Tom had brought his proposals to Synod for debate and agreement.

Adrian Greenwood, London SE1

Something to say?

Drop us a line at THE BRIDGE. You'll find address and e-mail details on page 2. Publication of any letter does not necessarily reflect the views of the Diocese. Letters may be edited.



Bernard Mizeki anniversary service

It was interesting to read on p.3 of your May issue of the celebration of Zimbabwe's most famous Christian martyr by the Zimbabwe Choir and speaker Rev Chad Gandiyya.

My twin, Teddy, went out to South Africa with Fr Claude Lunnis C.R., and was professed on 10 July 1956. This was a period when S.A. soldiers thought nothing on seeing a little native boy, just to shoot him dead - as letters from Teddy mentioned.

Sent to Alice, Teddy was the seminary's librarian, 1963-1977. In civil life, that was his profession on leaving St Olave's School - as choristers of the Cathedral, that was where the chapter sent us.

Teddy died out there (South Africa) at St. Peter's Priory, West Turffontein, in 1987.

Harry Coles, London SE3

First world war executions

In the April Bridge

Doreen Jansen rightly asked, 'in the light of the Prime Minister's televised affirmation of his Christian beliefs how could he reconcile "Father Forgive" with refusing posthumous pardons to deserters unjustly executed in the Great War'.

Those shot were young, many had volunteered and very many suffered from shell shock.

But then, Mr Blair has involved us in more wars than any previous premier, having clearly forgotten Christ's command to his followers to "love your enemies".

Like 'Born again' Bush, Mr Blair ignored Christ's warning when a disciple drew a sword trying to save Christ from arrest.

Christ said, "Put up your sword, for they that take the sword will perish by the sword" - a truth proved by every war since, including Iraq, unjustly invaded by Forces ordered by Messrs Bush and Blair, who have killed thousands of civilians, including women and children.

One of the great Christian Fathers, Tertullian, said that in disarming Peter, Christ disarmed every Christian. Would they thought so.

Ronald Mallone, Blackheath

Excellent world war book - but only half the story

I thoroughly agree with your correspondent in the May edition of 'The Bridge' that the book 'Diocese of Southwark 1905-2005 a centennial celebration' is excellent.

It is a most interesting and readable account of the history of the south London suburbs and its social evolution over time.

But therein lies the rub. Geographically, only around half of the Diocese of Southwark lies within the south London suburbs.

The other half, to the south, extending into Surrey to the Sussex borders, hardly got a mention at all.

No matter if the book had been entitled 'A history of south London'.

But it was not. The fact that this was sanctioned by the powers-that-be as THE book to celebrate the centenary of our large Diocese sends a powerful message to those of us who live in the south that we count for nothing.

Rev Mary Seller, Hurst Green

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Thank you

Many thanks for an absolutely excellent issue of The Bridge (Vol. 11 No. 3).

The Crib and the Broken Cross on page 1 was moving, the Stations of the Cross on page 12 were thought provoking, and the articles on mental health in the middle pages were inspiring. I shall certainly contact my local branch.

Jane Wenlock, South Dulwich

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