

In Touch

The Cathedral Magazine - Winter 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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Record takings at annual Fair

The 2014 Michaelmas Fair proved yet again that no matter how old this event gets it can still exude freshness and a youthful vigour. Under the indomitable leadership of fair committee chairwoman Rita Chan, this year's Fair was a bumper year, not only for high spirits, but also for fundraising.

In Touch can report that total funds raised from the 2014 Fair (including the raffle) were an amazing **\$1,383,697 (up \$31,573 from 2013)**. Pre-Fair fundraising events such as the annual Walkathon, Concert and Pre-Sale brought in an additional **\$451,209.60**. Whilst obviously delighted with the result, Rita commended the tremendous team spirit of her committee members, as well as that of the army of volunteers who worked so hard on the day.

The Fair was packed with the usual polyglot of stalls selling clothes, books, coins, stamps, flowers, handmade crafts and greeting cards, alongside services from face painters, balloon sculptors, masseurs and henna body artists.

The artistic entertainment this year seemed much more than the usual broad medley of pipers, brass bands and dancers. The entire Cathedral compound was stuffed with foods and home produce of all types, and around the beer tent there developed what one organiser described as 'A festive air'.

In Touch's stunning souvenir photo series of the Fair are on pages 20-23



June Li (left) and Rita Chan at the Opening Ceremony of the 2014 Michaelmas Fair

Newly ordained clergy radiate joy in St John's

On the Feast of St Francis, Anglicans from around the Province packed into the Cathedral to witness Archbishop Paul Kwong ordain a new deacon and three new priests.

Amidst prayers and hugs, tears and laughter, and smiles and applause, the four ordinands received overwhelming support from their families and friends, clergy colleagues, and hundreds of well-wishers. Archbishop Paul preached the sermon and was principal celebrant at the concelebration Eucharist that followed the rites of ordination.

During the ceremony the Revd Amos Poon was ordained to the diaconate and the Revd's Wu Wai Ho, Simon Tang and Billy Ip were ordained to the priesthood. All four are graduates from Ming Hua Theological College.

After making their solemn ordination vows and receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit by the ancient



(From left) Wu Wai Ho, Simon Tang, Amos Poon and Billy Ip

ritual of laying on of hands, the newly ordained ministers turned to the congregation and were given a thunderous round of applause and a standing ovation – a moment in their rite of passage to Holy Orders none of them will ever forget.

More ordination photos and an interview with the Revd Wu Wai Ho on pages 8-11

In Touch

In this, our third edition, we are happy to report that St John's continues to be an attractive destination for a spread of interesting and distinguished visitors, this time from North America and Ireland. All of them were delighted to be in Hong Kong, and for many it was their first time in our great city. They were as keen to learn about our ministries, as we were to learn from theirs. Two of the visitors led some fascinating discussions on peace and reconciliation, which, for obvious reasons, is a hot topic in Hong Kong just now. In recognition of local developments and the urgent global needs for peace and reconciliation, we have an ever-thoughtful piece on the subject from Will Newman with some interesting photographic angles on the 'Occupy' protest.

We also feature two very different and notable ways in which true harmony has been celebrated in the Cathedral in recent months. In October a glorious ordination service was held in St John's, which included our own Revd Wu Wai Ho being made a priest, and the recent Michaelmas Fair proved an outstanding and high-spirited success. We record the Fair in a five-page essay of beautiful photographs, one of which (on the back page) is a spectacular view of the opening ceremony from the top of the Tower. We hope they capture the spirit of a very happy and successful Fair.

Whilst we were up in the Tower we took some pictures of the bells. Most people have no idea of their size and scope. Some have simply assumed that they are an electronic recording. We run these striking images to illustrate an article by John Chynchen on the Cathedral's bells and to mark the recent repair of their control mechanism. Next to the bells' story, you will find the organ, also broken and now repaired and a great

prompt for choir historian Thomas Li to give you an account of that instrument's history too.

As always, *In Touch* tries to look beyond the walls and this edition carries an enlightening piece by Philip Wickeri on the relationship between the State and Christian churches in China. Mark Gandolfi of the St John's Counselling Service takes a disturbing look at a new generation's bondage to electronic screens and the consequences this has for human relationships. The Cathedral often searches itself to find ways of reaching outside when some of us overlook the considerable if understated effects we already have. That is why we are featuring CLARES and their Castaways Shop, which, quietly and efficiently, both make good money week after week for charities that aren't much noticed.

As the Dean reminds us in his Message, Christmas seems to be accelerating its approach. To help you plan for your worship, information on all the major services in the Cathedral and daughter churches can be found in the inner back pages. Then turn to the back cover and get taken right to the top of the Tower!

Keep your stories coming, and an early reminder that copy deadline for the spring issue is **Monday 2nd March, 2015**.



I do not run aimlessly, nor do I box as though beating the air; but I punish my body and enslave it, so that after proclaiming to others I myself should not be disqualified.

(I Corinthians 9: 24-27)

Full story on Page 12

THE DEAN'S MESSAGE



Dear Friends,

Time flies, doesn't it? Before we know it, we have entered Advent, are approaching Christmas and counting down the days to the New Year. The month of December is occupied with busy church activities and business and personal celebrations. We rush from one event to the next with our best smiles and wardrobes. We hurry to complete the list of thoughtful gifts for our loved ones.

There was a time when I resented how some people had allowed the "festival Christmas" to overtake the "spiritual Christmas". They thought more of gifts and parties than they did of the true meaning of this season - the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. I now realise that, despite what people think about Christmas, this is still a special season in which people offer more love, thoughtfulness and sacrifices to others than at any other time in the year. In a sense, this can be a great opportunity for people to see and experience God since God is the source of all love.

As Christians and the Church, how we can bring the true meaning and spirit of Christmas to those who happen to miss the focus? Maybe besides inviting them to parties, we could invite them to the Christmas services at the church as well. Besides sending them a gift, we might remind them with an additional note that the true gift for this season is the birth of Christ and the love he brings. Maybe instead of just exchanging gifts, we might spend some precious quality time with each other. And for Christians, besides the gifts and parties, we could truly make the effort and time to be thankful for the birth of our Lord and be faithful to his call for us in our daily dealing and living.

In Hong Kong, while we live with much materialistic abundance, people are yearning for deeper fulfillment in life and for more holistic relationships. In recent months, the tense political impasse in Hong Kong has acutely highlighted how divided and broken our community really has become.

This is a time when we need to remind both ourselves and the world that the true Prince of Peace is Jesus Christ. Peace in our heart, peace in our homes, peace in our communities and peace with God can only be received through following the teaching of Christ and by living in him.

Our liturgy proclaims, "Christ, who by his incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly." This is a sacred season in which God has many surprises in store for us. And yet, if we only focus on gifts and parties, we surely will miss out on what God has done and might do in our world. What a shame that would be!

In the coming weeks, by all means, celebrate. But don't forget what this season really is about. God loves us and Christ has come. Emmanuel - God is here with us. Walk with him and live in him.

Have a blessed Advent and a wonderful Christmas! God bless you all.

Dean Matthias

各位朋友，

時間過得真快！轉瞬間，我們已進入將臨期，邁向聖誕節並開始倒數新年的來臨。十二月總是一個種種教會和私人慶祝會接踵而來的月份。我們匆忙地從一個派對趕去另一個活動，並費時間心思準備心儀的禮物給自己關心的人。

在過往，曾有段時間，我是對某些人會重視聖誕慶祝活動過於聖誕屬靈的意義而感怨憤。他們滿腦子只想著派對和禮物而忘記這節日的真正意義——基督的降生。但我現在體會到，無論他們如何視聖誕節，相比一年中其他時間，這始終是人會把多一份愛，體貼和犧牲去付出的日子。從某程度看來，這是一個使人體會和遇見上帝的大好機會，因為上帝是一切愛的根源。

身為教會與基督徒，我們應如何在此節日把真正聖誕節的意義和精神去與人分享？除了邀請他們參加派對，我們亦可邀請他們來教會的崇拜。除了贈送份禮物，我們可加上一段溫馨的字句提醒他們真正之聖誕禮物是主的降生並他那份大愛。除了互贈禮物，我們更願意與對方花優質的時間在一起。而對於基督徒，除了互贈禮物和去派對，我們更應花心思與時間去為耶穌的降生而感恩，並在每天的待人處事中忠於他的呼召。

香港表面上是一個物質富庶的社會。但不少人飢渴著更溫馨之人際關係和有深度之生命意義。近月，我們面對之政治僵局充份表現出我們社會之分裂與破碎。

在此節日，讓我們提醒自己和整個世界，主耶穌基督才是真正的和平之君。心中的平安，在家中有和睦，在社群中之和好並與上帝之修和都有賴我們活在基督裏並遵從他的教導才會出現。

在我們崇拜禮文中宣稱說「在道成肉身中，基督把天地合一」。我們已進入一個神聖並充滿驚奇的時段，因上帝會將豐盛的恩典在我們預料之外時賜予我們。一旦我們只聚焦在禮物和派對，我們會錯失上帝在我們周邊奇妙的作為。多可惜啊！

在將來的數週，盡情的慶祝吧！但不要忘記此節日之真正意義。上帝愛我們，基督已來到。「以馬內利」- 上帝與我們同在。活在他中並與他同行吧！

願大家有蒙福之將臨期和喜樂的聖誕。上帝祝福你們。

謝子和+
座堂主任牧師



CATHEDRAL'S VIRTUAL TOUR GOES LIVE!

Update from webmaster Robin Hall

From September, visitors to the Cathedral's new website will have spotted an exciting new feature allowing our friends, regular guests and overseas visitors to take a 360° virtual tour of the Cathedral.

The online tour covers all the main areas of the Cathedral buildings, both inside

and out, and is packed with information about the history of St John's, our day to day worship and the different ministries we support.

The tour is designed to attract visitors and appeal to people who may be thinking of joining our congregation or moving to Hong Kong and looking for a place of

worship. We also hope that it will encourage former members of our congregation to keep in touch with St John's, and continue to feel a part of our wider Cathedral family.

Many thanks to everyone involved in the project and to all of you who were photographed in the congregation during our Pentecost service in June.

ST JOHN'S 165TH ANNIVERSARY CONCERT



At the end of the Cathedral's 165th Anniversary Concert on 20th September, the performers gathered on the chancel steps for this group photo. The concert, involving all the choirs and congregations of the Cathedral family, was a memorable celebration of fine music, poetry and historical reflections on the life and witness of St John's from 1849 to the present day.

EMMANUEL CHURCH'S AUTUMN DINNER



On 8th November forty Emmanuel parishioners enjoyed an evening of delicious food, fun and fellowship in the Hong Kong Country Club. Attending the parish's Autumn Dinner were eight relatively new members who were warmly welcomed into the church family by Fr Nigel Gibson, Fr Robert Martin, churchwardens, committee members and other parishioners. As one parishioner said later, 'We both really enjoyed the opportunity to get to know everyone better; we had a great table and there were some very funny moments.'



THE FAITHS' TEAM: Remembrance Sunday, 9th November 2014 at the Cenotaph, Central, Hong Kong
Left to Right: Fr Jim Mulrone (Roman Catholic), Ishwar Sharma (Hindu), Uthman Yang Xing (Muslim), Dr Tong Yun Kai (Confucian), The Revd John Chynchen (Anglican), Ven Sik Hong Ming (Buddhist), Ms Yip Man Kwan (Taoist), Rabbi Asher Oser (Jewish)

CONNECTED BUT APART

Are we consuming too much digital technology? Many experts believe we are and that society is now paying a heavy price for its addiction to apps, social networking and online gaming. Some contend that our 24/7 layer of connectedness is ramping up anxiety levels, leaving many with a feeling that life is getting out of control. Being surrounded by a constant din of beeping and buzzing electronic gadgetry is causing many people to experience behavioural problems, and especially young children and teenagers. *In Touch* sought a professional opinion about this worrying trend from Dr Mark Gandolfi, Executive Director of the St John's Cathedral Counselling Service. This is his report.



Mark Gandolfi

It was not that long ago that the first website was developed in 1989 by CERN, European Organisation for Nuclear Research, to enhance the sharing of knowledge globally between universities and selected organisations. CERN eventually released a public and free version of the World-Wide-Web on 30th April 1993. Since then, truly, life has never been the same.

The Internet and its related technologies, devices, businesses, products and services have made their impression upon all of us in so many shared and individual ways. The world's largest IPO (\$25 billion) was by e-commerce company Alibaba, more advertising money is spent online than on television (\$42 billion versus \$40 billion), 3 of the top 5 market value companies are Apple, Google and Microsoft, we receive on average one letter every seven weeks versus over 100 emails and 100 texts per day, and sadly as CNN reported on February 13, 2014 the day before Valentine's Day "... traditional dating as we know it is dead."

There is an abundance of news stories about the marvels and benefits the digital world has provided us. We now use internet technology in the operating theatre to save lives, we go online to teach children Math and English in remote villages, small and medium businesses can now conduct international business without ever leaving home, online shopping for everything from nappies to bedroom furniture saves us a trip to the shopping mall, and artists can upload original works of art that may have never made it to a book store, music store or art gallery. In short, the Internet has enhanced "human doing."

However, the 24/7 presence of the Internet world and digital technology has its fair share of skeptics, critics and concerned individuals. Susan Greenfield, a well known neuroscientist in the UK, recently stated in the Daily Mail, "Already, it's pretty clear that the screen-based, two dimensional world that so many teenagers - and a growing number of adults - choose to inhabit is producing changes in behaviour. Attention spans are shorter, personal communication skills are reduced and there's a marked reduction in the ability to think abstractly." It is not uncommon to hear on the news (*online* BBC I assume) how too much of the internet can also cause addiction, anxiety and mood disorders as well as sleep disorders, social reclusiveness, poor interpersonal social skills, cyber-bullying and suicide, and instant boredom with anything that cannot be changed with a "point and click." The critics do have a point.

Others believe the Internet has, more drastically, changed how we define the self and socialise with others. Social media such as Facebook and Twitter has become the "platform" for children, teens and adults to create and define their identities like we have never seen before. There are over 217,000,000 Google search hits on "the essential elements for a Facebook page." Many parents I have worked with over the years shared with me their struggles in giving their children more than 7 ways to define their values and identity when raising children before the internet explosion. Thank you Facebook, you just made creating one's own identity one click away for the digital generation.

Socialising, one of the most important human behaviours in building the necessary skills for surviving and thriving in the personal and business world has now "gone online." 139,000,000 Google search hits arise when you type in "online dating" and research from the U.S. now shows that one-third of all marriages arise from online dating (whew - good bye blind dates!) Over 71% of American teenagers have online profiles with pictures, personal details and even telephone numbers and boast among their peers how many friends and likes they have on their Facebook. Other studies show increasing number of shy and socially awkward children and teens developing more friendships online than at schools, enhancing the risk of abuse and cyber-bullying among other concerns. We now have friends from around the world we never met in person, we can locate lost friends from another time and place we once lived



at, and some parents now proudly boast, "I know my child's best friend - it's her laptop." In short, the Internet has now redefined the "human being."

We have *no* universal internet-technology standards on anything, from what age should a child learn digital technologies to how long should we look at a computer monitor or play video games or chat online, or even how much school-based learning should come from a laptop instead of a teacher and, from what seems like the age of the dinosaurs now, a chalkboard. We are also still attempting to define the supportive elements we should integrate when using digital technologies: how often to take breaks, what should we eat and drink when being online, sit versus stand, loose clothing or not, eye glasses on or off, bright or dim lights. One universal fact is obvious; we generally sit or lay down when using digital technologies. But as my favorite Italian paternal grandfather once said, "Never trust a decision made sitting or lying down." Hence, I no longer write serious emails sitting down.

We have always known that too much of a good thing can be bad for us, but just what defines too much of a good thing for the Internet and digital technology to "become bad" remains a scientific and social argument we have not finished. One symptom we generally all agree upon when the internet is a bad thing is when we notice that no matter how connected we are to others, there remains a frequent physical distance between close friends and family members. It's great when I can text my son when he is at the shopping mall, but it's even more wonderful when we can sit down and share a meal together at the same dining room table. Families today must be mindful of how to remain connected but not apart.

Editor's Note: This article is the first of a series of Well-Being features commissioned by In Touch from the St John's Cathedral Counselling Service. Part 2 will appear in the spring edition in which Dr Gandolfi will offer some guidelines on how best families can develop an Internet family policy.



REFLECTIONS OF A NEWLY ORDAINED PRIEST

Following the Revd Wu Wai Ho's ordination to the priesthood in October, Nigel Gibson caught up with him in the St John's library for an interview for In Touch. Understandably, after such a momentous moment in his life, Wai Ho was still basking in his newly found acceptance, adulation, and mission. The long and often arduous years of preparation and discernment were finally over. What was uppermost in his mind on the great day? 'When my ordination day arrived', says Wai Ho, 'all I could think to do was to ask the Holy Spirit to come into my heart and make me worthy of such a high calling'.



How and when did you know you were called to be a priest?

Wai Ho: For me the call began during my tertiary studies. Back then I wasn't thinking so much about priesthood, rather more as a young minister being called to assist the various ministries of the church. But after several years of teaching I began to think more deeply about the possibility of ordained ministry. After talking with many brothers and sisters and colleagues, things started to become clearer in my mind and the prospect

of a calling to the priesthood became all the more real. In my case the call didn't come quickly. It evolved over time and through a lot of prayer, seeking God's will for my life. I am grateful for that time because it allowed me to really check my motives and to ask others and myself lots of questions.



Wai Ho with his parents Daniel and Irene, Andree his wife, sister Vivian, brother Ricky, and niece Harriet

As a potential leader in the church, did you ever ask yourself if you would sweep the church if no one else will? Would you clean the church loos if no one else were around? Would you visit the sick and support the poor? Were you really comfortable with the prospect of washing the grubby feet of parishioners?

Wai Ho: When I was the Sunday School principal in my mother parish, a little boy got stuck on the toilet. No one else was around, so I was the one who had to rescue him and clean him up. From the beginning I saw myself as a servant. As a priest I think it is very important to be prepared to do everything in the parish, not only

think it is beneficial to have a secular career before priesthood?

Wai Ho: I shall always regard my years of work outside the church as invaluable experience. They broadened my horizons and showed me the importance of building networks with different people. They also taught me a lot about crisis management and how to deal with self-recognition. More and more I am seeing what my secular experience did for me and how it has helped to reaffirm my vocation to the priesthood. I am grateful for that.

As a theological student, did you ever doubt that priesthood would be 'enough' for you, that a life in full-time ministry would fulfill you as a person?



Archbishop Paul was principal celebrant at the concelebration Eucharist

teaching and preaching, but also the many domestic duties. One will then understand more about the mission and the vocation.

How much support did you get from your family and friends?

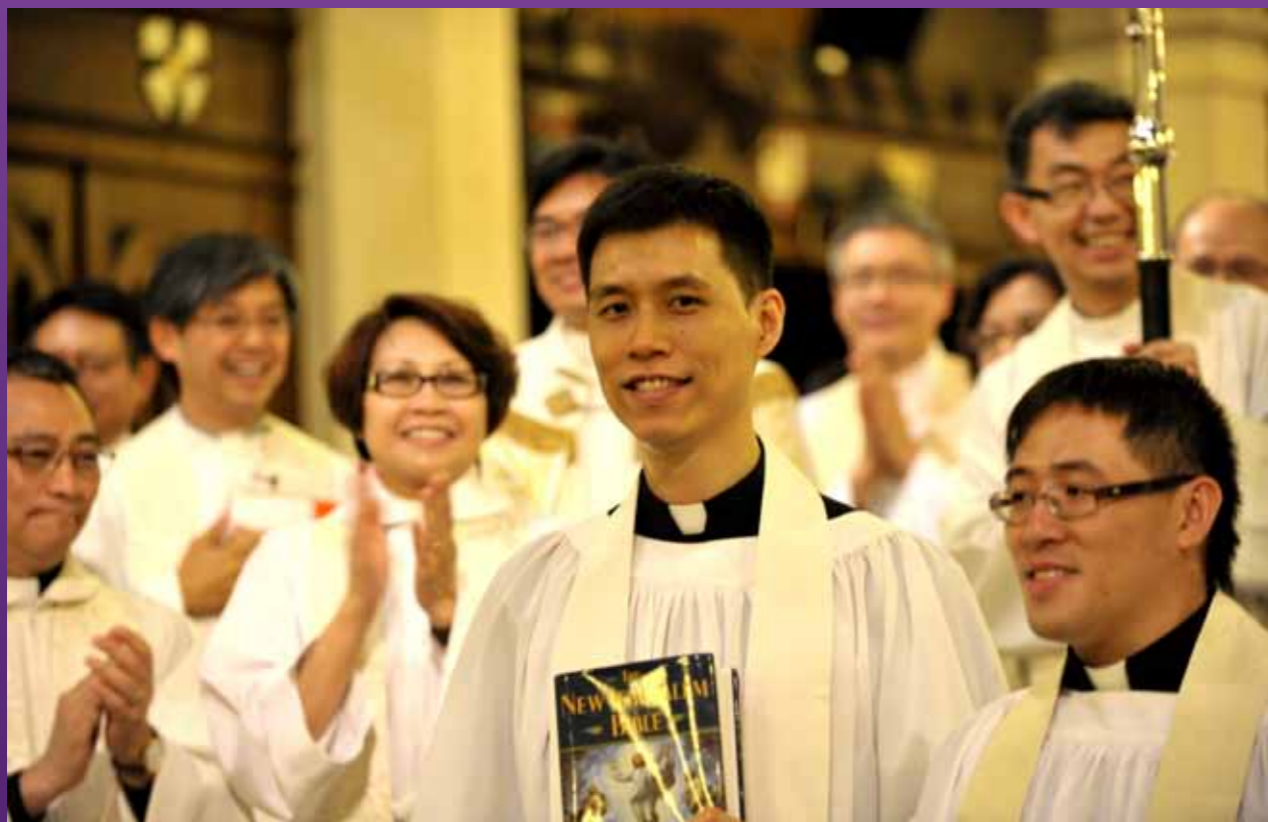
Wai Ho: My parents, my wife and my friends have been a great strength and support to me throughout the long discernment process. Honestly, I don't think I would have made it through to ordination without their nurturing and encouragement. All of them have been truly wonderful and I've so much to thank them for. As a third generation Christian I also feel very fortunate to have been raised in a strong Christian family.

Before you began training at Ming Hua Theological College you were a primary school teacher. Do you

Wai Ho: God calls everyone to serve him. In the Bible we read that there are plenty of different ministries, priesthood being just one of them. In my case, I felt strongly that God was calling me to pastor and to nurture his sheep, and to proclaim and to teach the Good News. I am a gift of God, and I hope what I do in ministry will be a gift to him.

What was your greatest surprise as a deacon?

Wai Ho: My greatest surprise was the large number of regular members of the church who have little understanding of a deacon's role. Many seem to think a deacon is merely to assist the celebrant at the Eucharist, or that it is some kind of transitional priest. In fact, the role of a deacon is to serve and to learn, to teach and to proclaim the gospel. As a deacon at St John's over the past year, I am grateful to the Dean and all my clergy colleagues for their guidance and support.



Each in their own way gave me the benefit of their knowledge and experience, as well as the opportunity to thrive in our diverse community. Through participating in a variety of worships, teaching and pastoral care projects, I have deepened my ministry and broadened my spiritual horizons.

Ordination to the priesthood takes years of spiritual, pastoral and academic preparation, yet the ceremony itself takes a little over an hour. What was going through your mind when the great day finally arrived?

Wai Ho: Finding the right words to adequately describe the experience of being ordained is hard, if not impossible. Of course, years of study at college taught me a lot of what priesthood is about. But I don't think any amount of study and preparation can prepare a student for the full reality of priesthood - such is the enormity of the task. I say that because so much of priesthood is wrapped up in the mystery of Christ himself, whom we can never completely comprehend. I believe that God has a plan for everyone, and now that I am ordained I will spend the rest of my ministry discovering what that plan is for my life. When my ordination day finally arrived all I could think to do was to ask the Holy Spirit to come into my heart and make me worthy of such a high calling. It's a day I shall never forget for the rest of my life.

What are you looking forward to most in the priesthood?

Wai Ho: I hope I can learn to see and think more like Jesus. Being a priest, one represents him at the altar. I see this as the most honourable and humble moment in any priest's ministry. I also hope to point the way

ahead for people and to walk with them to their ultimate destination.

Are there any particular areas of ministry you would like to develop during your chaplaincy at St John's?

Wai Ho: I'd like to try everything and learn something from every ministry here. I'd especially like to enhance more people's understanding of what Anglicanism is, and to build our identity on this profound history and heritage of our church.

Saying 'Yes' to God and the Anglican Church is of course much more than just pretty vestments and the 'theatre' of ceremony. It is also saying 'No' to some powerful temptations that come up from time to time – the kind that threaten to derail a priest's vocation. How do you see yourself coping with these challenges and times of discouragement?

Wai Ho: Having been ordained a priest on the Feast of St Francis of Assisi will always serve to remind me that I am not only responsible for looking after the poor and the weak, but also to be a peacemaker, to be a channel of peace and reconciliation. Opportunities always come with crises, and that's the time for the church to grab the chance to witness God's love and forgiveness to the world.

The very next day after your ordination you celebrated your first Eucharist in a packed cathedral.

That must have been an awesome experience for you personally, and also for your family.

Wai Ho: Oh yes, it certainly was. I was very excited and grateful. In fact, the next day I was celebrant at both the 09:00am Eucharist in English followed by the 10:30am Mandarin service. It was an amazing experience. As I said before, one important role of a priest is to be a bridge between God and his people. So, as celebrant at the Eucharist, people can encounter and recognise God from the priest's reenactment of the Last Supper, which is a foretaste of the heavenly banquet. God feeds and nurtures his people through his Body and Blood at the same time. What a privilege for me to celebrate this feast on behalf of our Lord and the Church! Certainly I was nervous that day and feeling overwhelmed by so much love and support. But thanks to God I got through it all just fine. I owe much thanks to the Dean, the whole Cathedral and my family for their trust in me and for their support. I take every celebration of the Eucharist seriously, as if it were my first and last. It's important to offer our best of the best to God!

In a few years time it is likely you will have the weighty responsibility

of running your own parish in the Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui. In an aggressively secular society, how will you handle hostility to the church and possibly to you personally?

Wai Ho: One of my favourite verses in the Bible is: *'My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness'* (2 Corinthians 12:9). A priest is a mediator between God and his people. It's always a challenge to speak the truth. Therefore, we should always pray for wisdom to deal with challenging issues and offer compassion to the lost.

Is there any advice you could give to anyone thinking about becoming a priest?

Wai Ho: Listen to God, observe what the church needs, and equip yourself in multiple ways. Pray for guidance from the Holy Spirit. Get involved in a parish as much as you can and, when you feel ready, share your thoughts and feelings with an experienced priest. He or she will guide you further.



Archbishop Paul Kwong with his newly ordained priests and deacon

Pre-Michaelmas Fair Fundraising

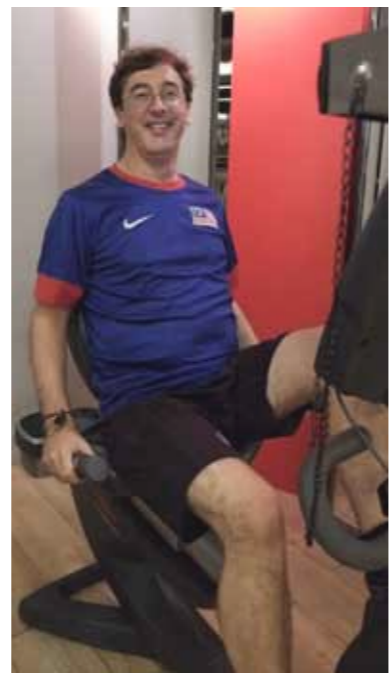
By Rita Chan

I am so thankful and grateful for the experience of being chairwoman of the 2014 Michaelmas Fair Committee. Throughout the year I have worked closely with the committee organising events, coordinating the working team, communicating with guests, looking for sponsors and donors, and trying to keep a balance between my work and family. In fact, I have actually gained far more than I have contributed.

I thank our Lord for giving me the strength and wisdom to accomplish the various tasks associated with the Fair. With the support of the clergy and

my sisters and brothers at St John's, we have achieved our goals of developing good fellowship and reaching out to the community.

I should also like to thank Jeannie Chan for sponsoring a fun-filled running challenge at PURE Fitness in August. Fifteen runners completed the required running distance and were warmly applauded by their generous donors for their great efforts. Collectively, the team raised more than \$34,000 for the Fair. This was followed in September by a delightful music recital at Ian Burchett's residence that raised a further \$31,000.



High Sewing '2 by 2's' awarded the Goodwill Cup

Discovery Bay is a community well known for both its outdoors and fitness lifestyle and generous philanthropic spirit, so it comes as no surprise that the annual calendar is packed with charitable sporting events.

An autumn highlight for the past decade has been the *Tennis Charity Cup*. Over 200 players form teams to play tennis and raise money and awareness for local children's charities.



Discovery Bay Church entered a tennis team for the first time this October and came home with silverware. Our community is home to a young and vibrant congregation and the enthusiasm for participating in community events as a team is very strong. The tennis team named itself the 2 by 2's, a pointer to the well known Old Testament story, but also suggestive of partnership and teamwork.





There are two annual team tennis events in Discovery Bay. *The Nations Cup* in March is a highly competitive event, involving friendly rivalries between people from different parts of the world in the international community that makes up Discovery Bay. *The Charity Cup* is more firmly focussed on charity and to have a fun day playing tennis encouraging participation of all standards. A natural fit for the 2 by 2's!



The 2 by 2's first appeared in the Discovery Bay dragon boat regatta held in June this year. A team of twenty plus enthusiastic paddlers competed hard through 3 rounds of races held in Tai Pak Bay. For both contests creatively designed team shirts displayed the team name and the Discovery Bay Church logo.

Each team tries to raise as much money as possible. One popular method is through a system of voluntary fines for such things as bad shots and swearing. This year teams were extolled to become ever more creative in eliciting donations, and to spur on their efforts a new award created, the *Goodwill Cup*, presented to the highest fundraising team. The 2 by 2's are very proud to be the inaugural winners in 2014.



This year the event raised a total of \$208,785 for the *Hong Kong Down Syndrome Association and the Watchdog Early Learning Education Centre*.

On the tennis side, the 2 by 2's played well. In an all doubles format, (men's, ladies and mixed), they were knocked out by the eventual winners in the second round. The remainder of the day was spent in a consolation pool with two of the other top 5 seeded teams, so the standard of tennis and fun had by all was high. It's something we will definitely do again, in support of our community and Hong Kong charities. Congratulations to team members Catherine, Lisa, Mark, Natalia, Richard, Scott & Sue. Many Congratulations Discovery Bay Church!



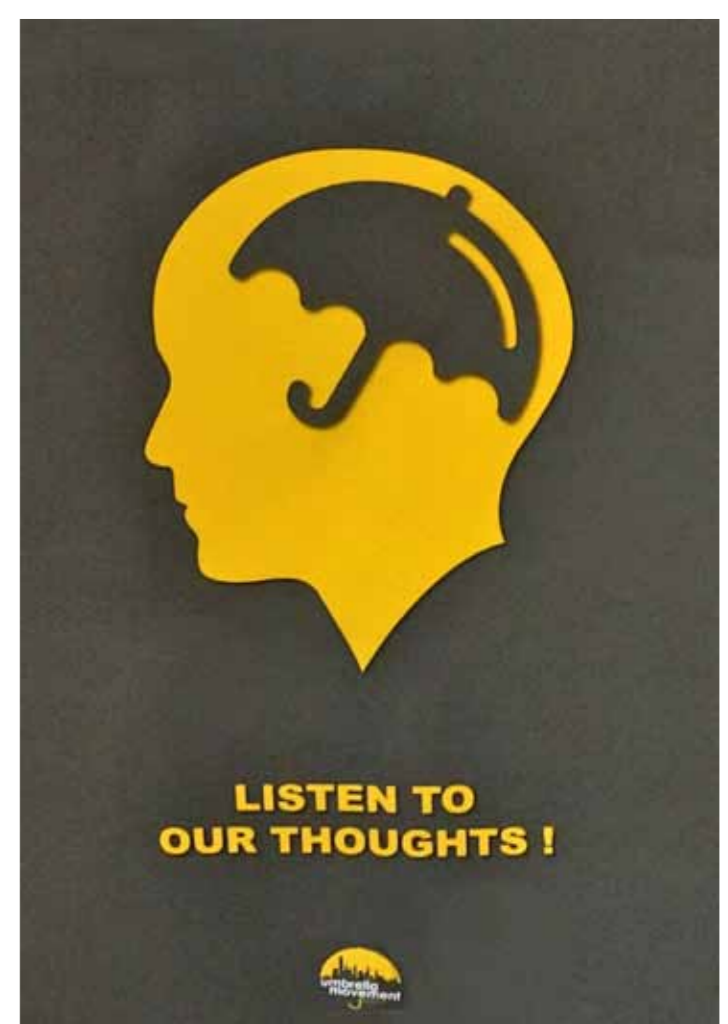
St John's Cathedral A Place of Peace and Reconciliation

By Will Newman



A multitude of brightly coloured post-it notes bearing messages of goodwill or defiance on the *Lennon Peace Wall* in Admiralty

Photo: Nigel Gibson



An iconic poster of the Occupy 'Umbrella Movement'

Lord God, we ask for your blessing on the people of the Hong Kong SAR. At this time of divided opinions strengthen those who work for mutual understanding; make our hearts open to hear and embrace those who hold different views from our own; and may our leaders work together to seek the common good. We pray in the name of one who spread healing and reconciliation among all people, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

If you have dropped in at the Cathedral any weekday recently, you will have seen a large candle set on a stand immediately in front of the Nave Altar, flanked by two votive candle stands, and with a space to kneel in prayer. The candle is the Peace Candle, dedicated in a lunchtime ceremony on 8th September. It's the most visible and constant reminder that this church of God is a place of peace and reconciliation, qualities most urgently needed in Hong Kong and the world.

Several events have come together this year to sharpen our focus on peace and reconciliation. It began on 4th June, with a moving service for peace marking the 25th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square Massacre in 1989. Two months later the cathedral hosted another service for peace, marking the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of the First World War, and attended by consular representatives from several Allied countries and Germany. And later in August as a practical response of faith to one of the current conflicts in the world, the cathedral and daughter churches raised over \$40,000 to help restore and re-equip the Anglican Hospital in Gaza, which played a vital role in the recent conflict there.

At the time of writing, the subject on everyone's minds is closer to home: the Occupy Central movement and the students demonstrating for full democracy. The Cathedral Clergy feel a strong responsibility to bring God's healing power of peace and reconciliation into this divided and polarised situation in our city and within the Church. At the height of the protests so far, a very moving Taizé service for peace was held in the Cathedral on the evening of 2nd October. Advertised in the press and around the

diocese, the service was attended by a large number of young Chinese Anglicans.

By the time of publication, St John's will have hosted a lecture by the Very Revd Kenneth Hall, Dean of Enniskillen, who has been closely involved in the peace process in Northern Ireland, entitled 'What can we learn from the conflict in Northern Ireland?' And if creating peace and reconciliation is partly about learning to listen to those who do not share our views, then the Christian Listening Course from the Acorn Foundation in England, offered by the Cathedral on Thursday evenings up to 20th November is a further way of making ourselves 'channels of your peace.'

The Dean, on a visit to England in October, met with the Archbishop of Canterbury's Adviser on Peace and Reconciliation, and also visited Coventry Cathedral's widely respected Centre for Reconciliation. We look forward to Matthias' thoughts on taking this vital aspect of our cathedral's life and work forward.

Meanwhile we continue to pray for a peaceful resolution to the Occupy protests in Hong Kong at this time, using a prayer written by one of the Cathedral chaplains earlier in the summer, which is now in daily use in the cathedral.



A special Taizé Service for Peace and Reconciliation in front of the Peace Candle and Franciscan Cross

CLARES: WORKING CASTAWAYS

Stuart Wolfendale takes a look at a Cathedral ministry that is long standing, unsung and surprisingly effective.

Behind the Castaways shop, next to the Li Hall, tucked in between it and the Cathedral compound's south wall is an old shipping container unit into which no natural light or Wi-Fi signal penetrates. It is the storeroom and sorting centre of the Castaways second-hand clothing operation, crammed to its tin roof with the clashing colours of hundreds of cast-offs being briefly fostered before sale. Sat calmly in the stark light, with abandoned spangled blouses and stray shoes round her feet, was Stella Carter, coordinator of the volunteers for Castaways.

'Its not for the squeamish in here', she admitted nodding to a sullen pile of woollens. 'Some of the donations are washed, pressed and as new. Others... well, you need your gloves and take them to the bin'.

Castaways is a child of CLARES - *Care Loving Action Response Effort Service* - an outreach ministry of St John's founded in 1963 by Shirley Till, a dean's wife with a lively social conscience. Its aim was to give idle expatriate women something useful to do for Hong Kong society. Initially CLARES was busy with a spread of projects. They bought a minibus for Sandy Bay Hospital, made mosquito nets for St Christopher's Home and knitted blankets.

In 1969, they began Castaways, to raise funds through selling second hand clothes. CLARES now focusses its activity entirely on this operation. It seems to have been a sound strategy. Stella said the expatriate community had changed. 'It's difficult to get people these days because they come and go so quickly so the other activities have disappeared with the times'. Castaways, however, has a solid purpose to it which attracts a regular and dedicated cohort of workers.

Not all the volunteers are from the Cathedral and many are not Anglicans. 'We get Catholics, United Church people, Baptists and some who are nothing at all,' reports Stella. 'We leave it up to them when they come; some once a week, some once a month or just at weekends. One lady who works nearby comes just in her lunch hours.' The only expertise most needed is patience with customers and getting their hands dirty.

Business is brisk enough for the shop to have a part time manager called Teresa who has been there for 5 years. 'Our anchor', says Stella. Teresa speaks

English, Tagalong and Cantonese. The volunteers cover most of the major European languages as well which is useful because the customer base is a wide one, including a concentration of Filipinas at the weekends, a multi-lingual range of Chinese and other expats, and tourists all the time. This puts the volunteers into close contact with the wider community. 'Many of them ask about the Cathedral, the city or for directions. It's like directing traffic,' says Stella.

CLARES, unostentatious, even unsung, but workmanlike and focused, is a remarkably effective outreach ministry of the Cathedral. These mostly ladies who move around their cramped shop and outside rails, sorting, grading, pricing and serving, raised over \$800,000 last year for charity. This comes at little or no cost to the Cathedral to which CLARES gives 25% of its takings anyway. In return, apart from the pokey shop space, St John's provides the

finances and technical administration. 'We are a democracy,' explains Stella. 'We have no office holders or committee because people aren't willing to spend time on those things. They just want to work'.

Behind the jumble-sale image, CLARES run a remarkably sophisticated organisation. 'All the people who do the pricing have worked in the shop a long time,' explains Stella. 'We know that the value of a garment is what you can get for it.' Currently, a T-shirt baseline price is \$20, a man's suit \$150 and trousers for both sexes \$30. Items like skirts and blouses vary too much in style and condition to generalise but if they have not moved in 4 weeks, they go on the \$10 rail and ultimately the bin.



They display clothes according to fashion seasons with winter items being held back until October. And they actually have designer label sales, twice a year in autumn and spring. The last one raised \$104,000 - in four hours!

Customer response is not left to chance and the Sunday pew bulletin. They have a database of previous customers and they advertise in *Dollarsaver*. 'It's nice to see a long queue,' says Stella. Has this thriving little business the potential to grow? 'We could do more if we had bigger premises but I don't see that happening.'

If the CLARES are unpretentious in their efforts, so are the beneficiary charities. 'If they are smaller, local charities with no official sources of funding, we give to them, mostly once a year, sometimes more.' *The Home of Loving Faithfulness Hospice* and the *St Barnabas Society for the Homeless* are two examples CLARES give on their website. Some charities with long connections to the Cathedral, like the China Coast Community, still feature.

Stella sees CLARES and Castaways bringing benefit to all involved. 'We provide a service because people want to donate their stuff. We give happiness to the buyer. We give funds to the charities themselves and it is good for us because we are not wasting time just playing mahjong and drinking coffee.'

That was one of Shirley Till's original objectives. Something else grew out of CLARES too. 'We look after each other in illness, loss and unhappiness. We are a support system'.



Stella Carter



Souvenir photographs of the 2014 Michaelmas Fair. Enjoy!

Photos: Stephen Lee and Nigel Gibson



Members of the Michaelmas Fair Committee at the Opening Ceremony

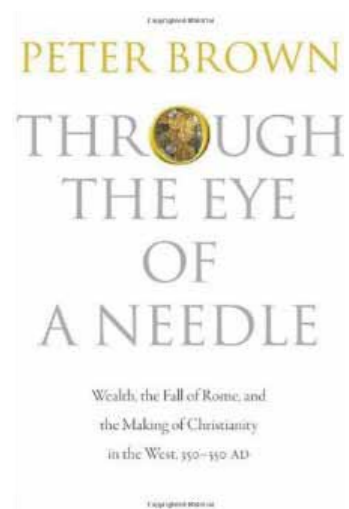




Michaelmas Fair 2014

Philippe Gonnet reviews for *In Touch* Peter Brown's most recent book *Through the Eye of a Needle: Wealth, the Fall of Rome, and the Making of Christianity in the West, 350-550 AD*

Book Review
BOOK REVIEW



How did the Christian Church, an institution founded on an ideal of renouncing worldly wealth, evolve to control much of Western Christendom's riches after the fall of the Roman Empire? Peter Brown, a leading scholar of Late Antiquity, displays formidable mastery of his subject matter in telling the story, one that runs from Emperor Constantine's vision to the fall of the Western Roman Empire and beyond to the Early Medieval period.

While Constantine granted significant privileges to the Church from the time he seized power in 312, Christianity remained a minority faith for much of the IVth Century. Classical paganism and new religions like Mithraism were favoured by most, particularly among the Roman establishment. Until the 370s, Christianity attracted mostly people of middling status and means, with only a sprinkling of wealthier people.

The Church devoted itself to praying for the empire, and also to looking after the poor. However, the Church's message, with its appeal to the rich to give to the needy, remained unheard by the truly wealthy, and particularly the senatorial class. Members of this "old-money" establishment remained faithful to a tradition of civic giving on a massive scale on public entertainment, which was intended to show their love of the city, and to boost their personal prestige accordingly. At the apex, the Emperor's bureaucracy devoted much time and energy to the "Annona", the distribution of free food (much of it grain and oil shipped from Egypt and North Africa) that covered the basic needs of the Roman citizenry.

Most of the beneficiaries of the Annona and of senatorial munificence were admittedly poor. But these beneficiaries accounted for only a minority of the poor of the empire, particularly in Rome itself. The key distinction was not between rich and poor, but between citizens and non-citizens. The *pauperes* of Rome had a social status and even a power that required careful managing by emperor and senators alike, while a great, faceless mass of non-citizens eked out a miserable life on the edges of Roman society.

It is this distinction that Christian bishops attempted to erase, channelling charitable contributions towards the poor without distinction of status, and trying to convince the super-rich to abandon civic love for a truer altruism. An uphill struggle, which Peter Brown narrates by bringing in a stellar cast of characters:

Here is Ambrose setting an example by donating his own wealth after being forcibly made Bishop of Milan by Imperial fiat. Martin of Tours, rejoicing when Paulinus, "a very large camel", passed through the eye of a needle, giving up his vast fortune to live in the imitation of Christ. Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, fighting Donatist and Pelagianist heresies to establish his vision of the City of God, one in which he admitted that wealth was a "providential fact" of divine origin. Here lies the crux of Brown's thesis: by setting the Church as the indispensable intermediary in redistributing wealth from the rich to the poor, and in doing so handling and controlling the very wealth it was meant to be spurning, the bishops were not betraying the early ideals of Christianity, but rather changing the

concept of wealth, giving it the "higher purpose" of buying a "treasure in heaven" through the very act of surrendering it.

At the beginning of the 5th Century, the "Age of Gold" fostered by Constantine was shattered by barbarian invasions. The great landholdings of the senatorial class gradually broke up. The imperial bureaucracy was unable to accomplish any more the prodigious administrative and logistical feat that the *Annona* constituted. Wealth became smaller and more fragmented, with new claimants competing to control it.

In this brave new world, the Church promoted its message with renewed vigour, and found newly attentive ears among its richer parishioners. Brown brings to life the character of Salvian, a VIth century monk whose tract "Ad Ecclesiam" was so effective that it was later described as a "manual in the clerical art of extortion". The Church's new wealth in turn required new rules and skills for its careful management.

By the early VIIth century, payments to the clergy and caring for the poor had become merged in the common thinking of the laity. This process led to a gradual "othering" of the clergy, under pressure from the givers, who thought their gifts could only be effective if handled by a "sacral class", distinct from the laity through dress, hairstyle, and sexual abstinence. The original Church had finally completed its transition to an institution more familiar to us in its tenets, organisation, and outward appearance.

Peter Brown's book is not a simple thesis applied on a broad historical canvas. Rather, it is a richly layered exploration of the early Church's development, supported by much evidence and always avoiding simplification or generalisation. This is not an arid scholar's dissertation either. The author's empathy for his subject matter is evident in his lively and often humorous style. If you must read only one book about the early church, Peter Brown's is the one to pick (over, for example, the questionable musings of another writer called Brown, first name Dan...)

Editor's Note: Peter Brown is Professor of History at Princeton University. The reviewer, Philippe Gonnet (below) is an Emmanuel Church parishioner.



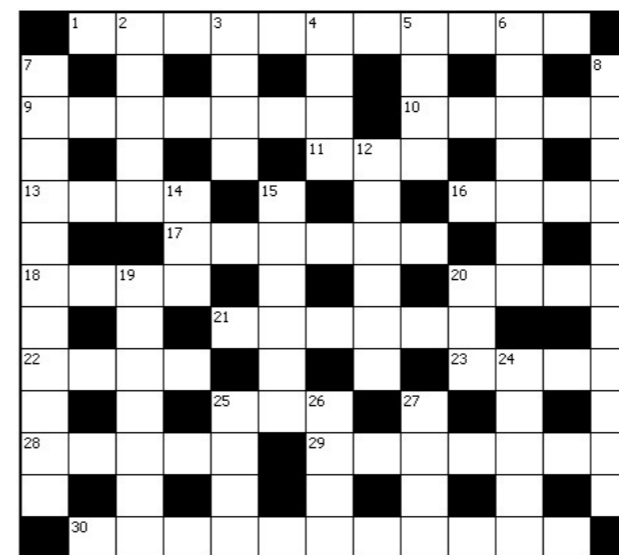
Welcome to Kendy Chau



The Cathedral Bookstore is pleased to announce the appointment of Kendy Chau as a full-time sales assistant. Kendy took up her new duties in August and brings to the store over 10-years merchandising and sales experience. Fluent in Mandarin, Kendy is well placed to serve the majority of the store's customers, many of whom are looking to buy a Bible, a prayer book, or simply a souvenir to take home.

Kendy will work alongside store manager Chris Everett and his team of volunteers. Chris is delighted to have Kendy on staff and believes she will make a significant contribution to the development of the store over coming years. Welcome Kendy to the St John's family!

The In Touch Crossword



- 17 Clambers (Jeremiah 48:44) (6)
- 18 Peter's response to questioning by the Sanhedrin: 'We must ___ God rather than men!' (Acts 5:29) (4)
- 20 Christian paraplegic author, artist and campaigner, ___ Eareckson Tada (4)
- 21 Bird partial to the nests of other birds (6)
- 22 'Such large crowds gathered round him that he got into a boat and sat ___' (Matthew 13:2) (2,2)
- 23 Infectious tropical disease (4)
- 25 Tree (3)
- 28 'No fear of me should ___ you, nor should my hand be heavy upon you' (Job 33:7) (5)
- 29 For example, to Titus, Timothy or Philemon (7)
- 30 Week beginning with Pentecost Sunday, according to the Church's calendar (11)

Down

- 2 'O Jerusalem how ___ I have longed to gather your children together' (Matthew 23:37) (5)
- 3 Way out (4)
- 4 Exhort (Romans 12:1) (4)
- 5 Done (anag.) (4)
- 6 Highest of the four voice-parts in a choir (7)
- 7 Concerning the study of God (11)
- 8 Uniquely, it has Abbey, Cathedral and Chapel (11)
- 12 Admonish (Matthew 16:22) (6)
- 14 Frozen (3)
- 15 Established form of religious ceremony (6)
- 19 Inscription often found on gravestones (7)
- 20 See 1 Across
- 24 Behaved (Joshua 7:1) (5)
- 25 Time (anag.) (4)
- 26 Lists choice of meals (4)
- 27 'For the wages of sin is death, but the ___ of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord' (Romans 6:23) (4)

Across

- 1 And 20 Down 'Lord of all ___, Lord of all ___, whose trust, ever child-like, no cares could destroy' (11,3)
- 9 Moses' question to a fighting Hebrew labourer: 'Why are you ___ your fellow Hebrew?' (Exodus 2:13) (7)
- 10 Acclaimed cellist who contracted multiple sclerosis at the height of her fame, Jacqueline ___ (2,3)
- 11 'At even ___ the sun was set, the sick, O Lord, around thee lay' (3)
- 13 A descendant of Gad (Numbers 26:16) (4)
- 16 Do not leave Jerusalem, but ___ for the gift my Father promised' (Acts 1:4) (4)

Solution on Page 27 - No Cheating 😊

FROM HUMBLE BEGINNINGS TO A FLOURISHING COMMUNITY



Fr Dwight with Officers of the Filipino Congregation Council

'Even if your beginnings were modest, your final days will be full of prosperity' (Job 8:7). This is a fitting biblical description of the growth and development of the Filipino congregation at St John's over the past two decades.

Since founding the community, chaplain Dwight dela Torre has led his flock from the front, offering spiritual guidance, pastoral care and support to literally thousands of Filipino migrant workers and domestic helpers, many of whom are the most vulnerable people in society.

In this article for *In Touch*, Dwight takes us back to his earliest days in Hong Kong and highlights some of the challenges he had to overcome to get the community up and running. From its humble beginnings, Dwight's congregation has now become

the largest constituency at St John's, which is a great credit to his faithful ministry and energetic leadership. As he himself says, 'No one can deny that over the years we have achieved a great deal and have touched countless numbers of people – but still a lot more can and must be done.'

I cannot remember what I felt when I received word from the then Dean of St John's, Christopher Phillips, that I was accepted as chaplain for the Filipino Christians in Hong Kong. That was in September 1993. I was excited but at the same time there was trepidation and arrived in Hong Kong at the end of January the following year.

I never dreamt of working overseas, let alone as chaplain to migrant workers. All I wanted to be was to serve in a parish and, if a scholarship or two would be available, I would further my studies.

Before coming to Hong Kong, all the woes, tales of horror or even success stories of migrants that I had heard or read about seemed so unreal. Surely, I thought to myself, these things happened only to a few unfortunate ones. But when I came here nothing prepared me for the magnitude of problems



migrants have. Some of these are structural: policies that really are discriminatory and excluding. Others are borne from the pettiness and meanness of some human beings to another. There is simply no "balance of power" in the work area. There is a blatant imbalance of power. Structural problems back home are also exposed. While there are some good laws and policies in the Philippines, those in the government have, in my opinion, just not done enough for the overseas Filipino workers who are keeping the domestic economy afloat.

My ministry at the *Mission for Migrant Workers* has made me realise that we are very much on the frontline working alongside migrants and their families. Those who visit or call us not only have labour, immigration or police issues and problems. They also consult us about health and family matters, and we often direct them to a government hospital or clinic. This makes the scope of our work very broad. Family problems make us link with churches, NGOs and government agencies back home.

For the first few months after I arrived, I spent my Saturdays and Sundays after the 9:00am service wandering around Central meeting Filipinos introducing myself to my compatriots. Some were cordial, civil or polite. Others were simply nonchalant, while others still obviously negative. I just thought the great religious divides back home are brought over to Hong Kong. In the process I met members of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente (Philippine Independent Church).

Many members expressed their wish for a Eucharist in Tagalog. I asked the leadership of the United Filipinos in HK (an alliance of Filipino migrants' organisations) to get the feelings of their members with regards to a Eucharist in Tagalog. Their response was enthusiastic. I broached the idea with the then

Dean, Christopher Phillips. To my surprise he was hesitant, at least initially. He felt that conducting a service in Tagalog might be seen as discriminatory. I think he was concerned that the Western and Chinese members of the congregation didn't want to worship with foreign domestic workers - hence a separate service for them. Eventually, however, after further consideration, Christopher gave the go ahead.

I think it was in 1994 on the Sunday before Palm Sunday that we held our first service. It was celebrated at the High Altar, known then as the Lady Chapel. We had 35 communicants, but from then on the congregation grew and grew. We also have formed an IFI HK Fellowship.

Most of those who attend church at the 2pm Sunday Eucharist are foreign domestic workers and are subject to the Immigration Department's two-week policy, and the curfew policies and demands of their employers. The congregation therefore is fluid and only a handful can come regularly yet, despite this, we still manage to achieve impressive results. We have a joint birthday celebration every other month. We have forums, lectures and workshops every third Sunday for learning and skills improvement for better service. We hold Bible Study classes for migrants on every fourth Sunday as well as participating in major activities on issues relating to their rights and welfare. We also engage in socio-cultural events hosted by other migrant groups.

Many of the Cathedral's congregants are foreign domestic workers and belong to this society's most vulnerable sector. I am very proud of the fact that St John's is open for them and that the clergy are also always on hand to help. Moreover, I am grateful the Cathedral continues to offer support to the *Helpers for Domestic Helpers* ministry and the *Mission for Migrant Workers*, two of our most valued outreach ministries. No one can deny that over the years we have achieved a great deal and have touched countless numbers of people - but still a lot more can and must be done.

Whatever changes take place in the political and economic landscape of Hong Kong, as long as foreign domestic workers are needed ministry alongside them will be an essential ministry of the church.



Dwight dela Torre



VISITORS BRING WISDOM, OPTIMISM AND FRIENDSHIP TO ST JOHN'S

BY STUART WOLFENDALE AND NIGEL GIBSON



Deans Matthias Der and Kenneth Hall



Bishop John McDowell

Even by St John's standards of accomplished and distinguished visitors, recent months have stood out. Nine bishops of the Episcopal Church of the USA (ECUSA) made a brief visit to Hong Kong following a meeting of bishops in Taiwan. Led by the Right Revd Dean Wolfe, Bishop of Kansas and vice president of the ECUSA House of Bishops, the visitors watched a PowerPoint presentation on the wide-range of ministries at St John's. They were then given a guided tour of the Cathedral, led by Dean Matthias and members of the chaplaincy team. On 28th September, Bishop Wolfe was guest preacher at the 9am Sung Eucharist.

In the pulpit on 12th October was Donn Morgan, Professor of Old Testament and Director of the Center for Anglican Learning and Leadership at Church Divinity School of the Pacific at Berkeley, California. Professor Morgan has studied and taught at the Chinese University (1992 and 1996) and Ming Hua Theological College (2012).

Speaking at the Cathedral later that month was the Very Revd Kenneth Hall, Dean of St Macartin's Cathedral, Enniskillen, Northern Ireland. He has been actively involved in reconciliation in a society riven by sectarianism. During a historic visit to Northern Ireland in 2012, Dean Hall accompanied the Queen on a symbolic walk from the Anglican Cathedral to nearby St Michael's Roman Catholic Church. It was the first time the Queen had visited a Catholic Church in Northern Ireland. As well as a preaching at St John's, Dean Hall gave a fascinating lecture in the Harold Smyth Room on 'Peace and Reconciliation Dialogue' and what could be learned from the conflict and peace process in Northern Ireland.



Bishop Dean Wolfe

Another visitor in October was the Church of Ireland's Bishop of Clogher, the Right Revd John McDowell, who gave a public lecture at Ming Hua on the theme: 'C. S. Lewis – A Personal Reflection'. He also addressed a clergy provincial meeting on 'The Spirituality of Peace and Reconciliation'. During their all too brief visit to Hong Kong, both Bishop John and Dean Kenneth strengthened the relationship between the two churches through conversations with Archbishop Paul and other senior church officials.

On 4th November, Stephen Lam spoke to *Christians in Central* on 'Coping with Pressure and Adversity'. Formerly Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs and Chief Secretary before retiring from government in 2012, Mr Lam went on to read theology at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford and now speaks regularly to a variety of organisations.



Stephen Lam (left) with Cathedral Trustee, Martin Matsui (centre) and Dean Matthias

CHRISTIANITY IN CHINA: PATHWAYS, PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

By Philip L. Wickeri

Earlier this year, a prominent Chinese scholar predicted that China would soon become the largest Christian country in the world. "By 2030, China's total Christian population, including Catholics, would exceed 247 million, placing it above Mexico, Brazil and the US." There have been conflicting estimates of the number of Christians in China. *The China Daily* recently claimed that there may be up to 40 million Protestant Christians, and other researchers put the estimate at 58 million with another 12-15 million Roman Catholics. No matter what figures you settle for, it is clear that the Church is growing rapidly.

The growth and development of Christianity is not just a matter of an increase in the numbers of adherents. There is also a growing interest in the Church in all sectors of society, and public appreciation and respect for "lived" Christianity. Many young people are drawn to the Christians they know who lead humble lives, show care for their neighbours and do not think more money is the highest value. They may not become believers, but they have respect for the Christians around them, and may even volunteer to work with Christian organisations. In urban areas especially, people know more about what Christianity is and their views are positive. This has also led to more young people with higher levels of education going for seminary training.



More Bibles and other religious literature are being published than ever before. The Amity Printing Company in Nanjing has now become the largest printer of Bibles in the world. Since its establishment in 1987, Amity has produced more than 66 million Bibles for distribution in China, including print runs in nine Chinese minority languages. Today, the Bible may be the most widely read book in China.

A new phenomenon is the increasing pluralism of Christianity, and a growing diversity of all religious forms and practices. In the case of Protestant Christianity, it is not accurate to speak of a binary opposition between the so-called "official" church and underground or unregistered churches. Instead, we can identify at least three different forms of Christianity in mainland China, all overlapping, and all of which are themselves diverse, but at the same time distinct in their own ways:

(1) **Institutional Christianity:** This is a better term than the "official" church, for it is more descriptive and much broader. Institutional Christianity would include the Three-Self Patriotic

Movement (TSPM) and the China Christian Council (CCC), and on the Catholic side, the Catholic Patriotic Association and related organisations. The institutional forms of the church help to maintain Christianity's public presence and social position. Institutional Christianity is part of the Chinese social system. There is great diversity in the theologies of institutional Christianity, but overall it tends to be mainstream conservative and evangelical. Christian institutions operate according to certain rules and regulations, has its own leaders, is related to government and Party bodies, co-operates with other institutions in civil society and maintains formal relationships with churches all over the world. The Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui maintains close relationships with the CCC and the TSPM.

(2) **Community-based Christianity:** This is the Christianity outside the formal institutional structures. It includes the various Christian meeting points, sometimes called "house churches" or "underground churches," and popular Christianity, especially in rural areas. It is by its very nature quite diverse, and includes orthodox and heterodox versions of Christian faith. It may have charismatic leaders, be associated with broader informal networks, and have unsanctioned relationships with overseas groups. The educational level of folk Christians in rural areas, and migrants in urban areas, tends to be lower than those of institutional Christianity. But in urban areas, many community based Christian groups include professional people with very high levels of education and sophisticated theologies.

(3) **Intellectual Christianity:** Intellectual Christianity includes those once termed "Culture Christians," scholars and academics in various university departments and social science institutes, those who became Christians in Western countries and returned to China, Chinese Christians who live overseas voluntarily or in exile, popular entertainers, lawyers and other professional people. In academic writings, poetry, art, music and literature, one can see the development of intellectual Christianity. A good number of academics pursuing post-graduate education are in this category. This is a social category in the sense that Christian intellectuals gather together, sometimes in their own fellowships, and are well represented in social media.

I am also including the various Christian activists and human rights lawyers in this group, although placing them alongside academics in universities and supportive of state structures does not seem to fit. Many human rights lawyers and activists are Christians. They may advocate different forms of "public theology," in opposition to the political authorities. And, they are increasingly outspoken, both at home and abroad.

These three social forms of Christianity are related to one another, positively and negatively. Positively, in the sense that there is mutual interaction for mutual benefit, and to some extent, a convergence of ideas and interests. Negatively, in the sense that they compete with and often criticize one another.

I have been speaking about Christianity among the Han majority. I should add that some national minorities have



Wenzhou's impressive Sanjiang Church in China's 'Jerusalem' before its demolition in May 2014

arbitrary arrests of Christians, the beating of Christians in jails, the detaining of priests and bishops who outwardly express loyalty to the Vatican, the confiscation of religious literature, the breaking up of Christian gatherings, and the refusal to register churches. Local officials worry about the churches' growing visibility. Some officials see a Christian potential for fomenting political unrest, or of being sources of foreign subversion. Many of the abuses of human rights and law have been in provinces in inland China and more remote places. There are also tensions between Christianity and traditional Chinese folk religions, which have a long history in China. These are inevitable, because of the growth of the church and its extremely conservative belief system that looks down on other religions. For example, Christians

large Christian populations, especially the Miao, the Yi and the Jingpo in southwest China. Theirs is a Christianity of the poor. Their faith has helped them through difficult times, and although their situation has improved, minority Christians don't have much of a public voice.

Although the educational level of Protestant pastors and lay leaders has greatly improved, there are still not enough to go around. This situation is unlikely to improve anytime soon. The institutional church estimates that there is less than one trained clergyperson for every 10,000 Christians. Even the institutional church is under-institutionalised. Church structures, such as they are, do not have adequate means of communication with the grassroots, an effective system of church organisation or a well developed church order.

And yet, the growth and pluralism of Protestant Christianity is unprecedented in Chinese history. This is the best environment there has been for religion in China since the founding of the People's Republic. Christianity is now more visible in China than at anytime in its long history: in cities and rural areas; among the old and the young, intellectuals and workers; in popular culture, in development and social service work, in education and in international affairs.

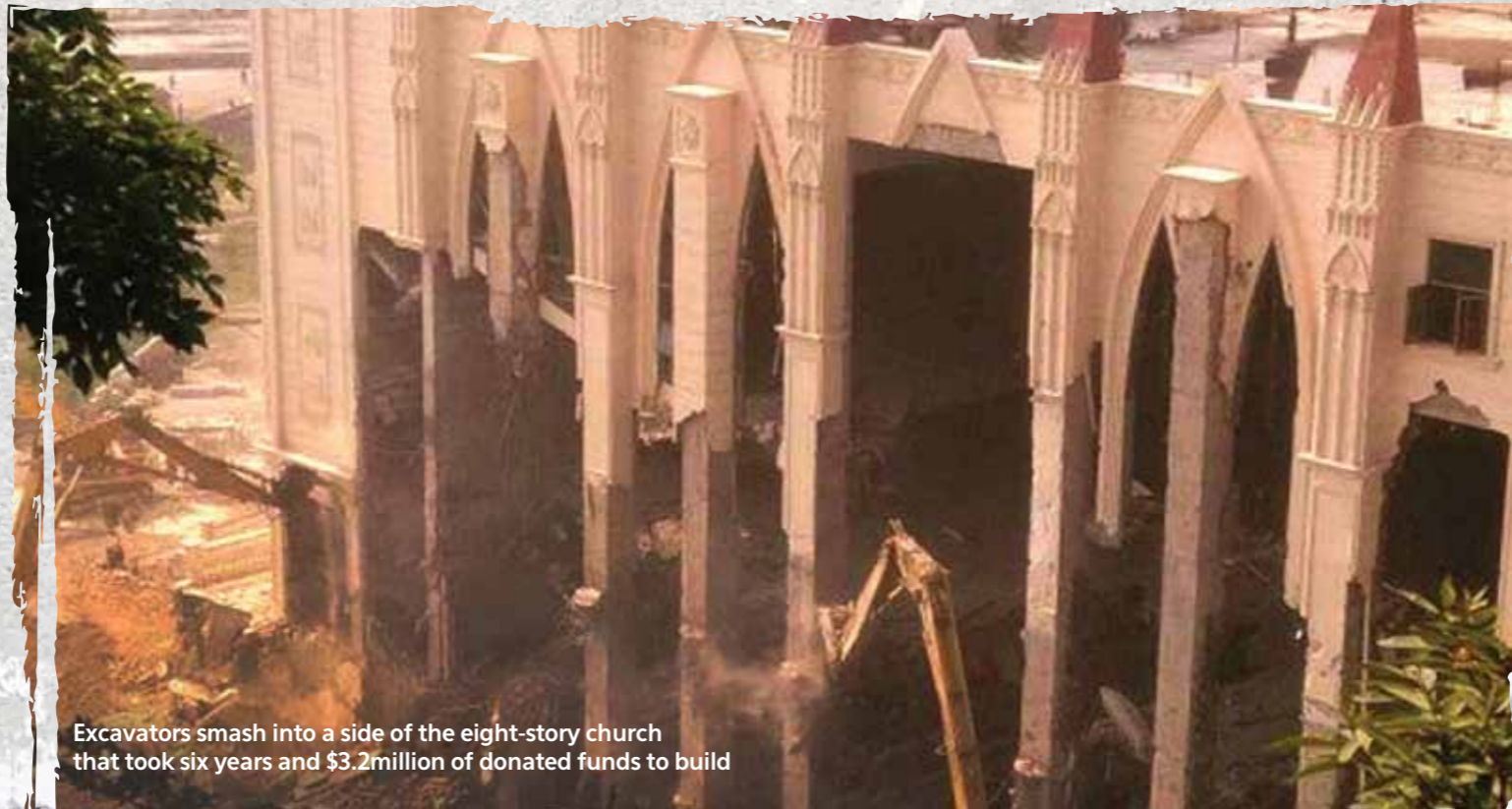
The very visibility of Christianity has also generated a hostile reaction in some localities, most recently in Zhejiang Province, near Shanghai. In May of this year, government officials bulldozed the Sanjiang Church in Wenzhou, the city that Christians call "China's Jerusalem." Wenzhou is only slightly larger than Hong Kong, but it has a much larger Christian population. The government claimed Sanjiang went over and beyond what had been approved. Big crosses on top of other churches have also been taken down. This past summer, the rebuilt Gu Lou Church in Hangzhou had its cross removed despite strong protests by local Christians. A friend of mine, a pastor in Zhejiang, told me that 300 crosses have been removed from churches close to major thoroughfares and in city centers. That number may be higher by now. The Zhejiang government clearly fears the spreading influence of the church. There is no evidence as yet that this is happening in other provinces. Still, the actions in Zhejiang are against the spirit of openness, and they exemplify how local officials override the law.

Chinese Christians and human rights groups continually complain about human rights violations. These include the

compete with other religions over the use of land for burial sites, and are sometimes accused of destroying the area's *fengshui*.

I would not want to generalise about government repression of religion. In fact, I think the government, especially the State Administration of Religious Affairs (SARA), has more often been helpful rather than harmful to Christianity. Churches could not have developed as quickly as they have in a totally hostile political environment. Religious freedom is real enough. There is, however, a wide range of policy implementation that varies a great deal from place to place. Officials pretend not to notice when religious groups violate regulations as long as they pretend to follow the rules, as Prof. Robert Weller of Boston University has written. This provides space for religious experimentation, adherence to rules of "normal" religious behaviour, but also the possibility of a "crackdown" when deemed necessary or politically expedient. The other eye can open at any time.

Not all Chinese Christians will pretend to follow the rules, nor are they willing to accept any limitation on their profession of



Excavators smash into a side of the eight-story church that took six years and \$3.2million of donated funds to build



A shattered dream: the mega church reduced to rubble in less than a week

faith. Some are quite courageous and speak publicly about human rights abuses. They have chosen a path that inevitably leads to confrontation and conflict with the authorities. It is a Christian option that we have seen again and again in the history of the Church. But it is by no means the only option that Christians have, and it is not a majority opinion.

The government has tried to keep religion within certain bounds, but the boundaries have been expanding over the last three decades. There is now a national effort to co-opt religion to contribute to the construction of an "harmonious society." As the government withdraws from social services, some religious groups including the Christian-initiated Amity Foundation, which may be the largest real NGO in China, have been asked to play a greater role in social welfare and relief work.

The Chinese government should develop a more open religious policy and correct existing abuses. This would strengthen China,

contribute to a "harmonious society," and help stabilise the system. However, even in the present situation, there is space for Christians to preach the gospel and develop their churches. Christianity can often thrive in a harsh political environment. We must recognise the difficulties that Christians face, but we should not exaggerate them. I tend to favor those who work for pragmatic responses to difficulties as they seek to live out their faith. The limitations on the full exercise of religious freedom have not prevented the growth and development of the Chinese Church in a variety of forms.

As a theologian, I am optimistic about the Christian future. Christians do not easily give up. We are patient. We are willing to suffer for our faith, if that is necessary. I believe Christianity will continue to develop in China in both old and new ways. It will become more pluralistic, less unified, more sophisticated, less "foreign," and all the while more interesting. Chinese Christians will have to negotiate the obstacles they face, but this is normal. It has been the situation of the Church for two thousand years, and in China it will be no different.



Editor's Note: The Revd Dr Philip Wickeri is an honorary chaplain at St John's Cathedral, an advisor to the Archbishop on Theological and Historical Studies, and Provincial Archivist. This article for In Touch is based on a talk he delivered at the Foreign Correspondents' Club in September 2014.

**'What is a church?' – Our honest sexton tells,
"Tis a tall building, with a tower and bells.'**

George Crabbe 1754-1832

John Chynchen recounts the 61 years' history of the Cathedral Tower's Bells, now restored following the installation of a new programmable Quartz Master Clock control unit, connected by GPS to the Atomic Clock in Rugby, England.

I forged a close familiarity with the tower of St John's Cathedral between 1990 and 1997...when on some Sundays and most high days and holidays, I would climb the stairs to emerge from the trap door at the top to hoist a St George's or Union flag on the flag pole generously manufactured and installed by Mr Li Fook Hing's boat yard in Sai Kung. I would begin the ascent shortly after 07:40 to ensure that I could reach the top and bend, hoist and break out the flag — almost invariably while fending off the Stuka-like diving attacks by the screeching squadron of white, yellow beaked, Government House-based, white cockatoos — and drop back down through the trap door to be clear of the belfry before the ear-shattering 08:00 chime.



PHOTO 1 — No. 8 Bell (Bourbon) 28 cwt. or 1,400 kg

The overall size and obvious considerable weight of the *Belfry* came as an initial surprise to me, in passing, as did the number of bells — eight, of which several were very big indeed. They were cast, tuned and installed by Gillett & Johnston of Croydon, England, a Founder and manufacturer established in 1844, and were presented to the Cathedral by the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation in 1953 to commemorate the Coronation on 2nd June 1953 of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. The largest bell, the No.8 (Bourbon) (Photo No.1) weighs 28 cwt. or 1,400 kg. with a maximum diameter of 51½ inches or 1.283m. Utilising the same materials and basic techniques used since the earliest times of bell founding several thousand years ago, the eight bells of St John's Chime (Photo No.2) were cast, as they have been in England since the 10th Century, in bell metal, a composite of pure copper and tin in proportions of 13 to 4. The Cathedral bells are tuned to Gillett & Johnston's perfected 5-tone harmonic principle developed from the method rediscovered by Canon Simpson from a practice used on the Continent in the early 17th Century, which, not surprisingly, became known as the *Simpson Method*. Within



PHOTO 2 — The Belfry: 92 cwt. (4,700 kg.) of copper and tin, with Nigel Gibson, our Editor (57 kg.) — mere mortal man

the *Belfry* on the top floor of St John's Tower, the upper section accommodates three bells, whilst the other five bells are housed in the lower section.

The *Clappers*, visible inside the bell mouths (Photo 2), are operated, although not activated for many years, by wires connected to the *Clavier* or keyboard on the first floor of the tower (Photo 3), and, formerly, also to the obsolete "music box cylinder" mechanism (Photo 4). Some 30 years after the installation and commissioning of the chime, a combination of the hot, humid climate and benign neglect resulted in a steady decline in performance and reliability. For some years in the mid-1980s the electro-mechanical "music box", which automatically rang the bells, was no longer in working order. In 1989-90, Andrew Moyes, Associate Organist and Choir member, initiated a major renovation exercise in which the mechanism was stripped down and placed in good general working order. But concurrently, it was realised by John Endicott and Roger Cole that the *Springs*, essential to the performance of the mechanism, had been fitted with replacements of the wrong weight. In 1990, contact was re-established with Gillett & Johnston in England and a solution was arrived at which resulted in new springs being made in Hong Kong to the proper specification, under John Endicott's supervision, and fitted in 1993. After adjustments to obtain the correct strike on each bell, it was necessary to adjust the mechanism so that each bell was rung in the proper sequence. Ultimately, a solution was arrived at by recording the chimes, making note of, and effecting the required adjustments and then repeating the exercise three or four times until the bells were in reasonable synchronisation.

In 2002, Roger Cole was instrumental in making the decision, after discussion with Gillett & Johnston, to upgrade the



PHOTO 3 — The "Clavier" (keyboard) for manual ringing of the chime

Cathedral's chime with the latest technological advances in bell striking mechanisms and an order was placed with that company for an *Apollo II Quartz Master clock* (Photo 5), together with 8 *electromagnetic hammers* of correct weight and proportion (Photo 6) and a GPS aerial providing the link to the Atomic Clock in Rugby, England. Steve Coombes, Gillett & Johnston's engineer, supervised the installation, commissioning and staff training for the *Apollo II* control unit and ancillaries in December 2002.

After 10 years of a climate that is not kind to electronic hardware — coupled with another lengthy period of benign neglect, the Bell Striking Mechanism started to exhibit 'ill health' circa 2012... particularly on Sundays! Ron Lye, Trustee and Chairman, F&F Committee, undertook a prodigious effort to locate a source of bell system expertise in Hong Kong and mainland China. It is generally accepted that the first bells were cast in China as long ago as 4,000 BCE. But, largely as a result of the Industrial Revolution and the British diaspora, it was in England that practically all rings of bells, as we know them, have been cast and tuned, and



PHOTO 4 — Electro-mechanical system for ringing the chime. Works on the same principal as a "musical box cylinder". Originally installed in 1953 - now obsolete



PHOTO 5 — Apollo II Quartz Master Clock (New — installed October 2014)

also that the Art (or "Exercise" as it is known among its enthusiasts) of Campanology was born and perfected in that country. Eventually, in July 2014, this writer suggested to the F&F Committee that he should make contact with Gillett & Johnston in England. A lengthy telephone conversation — John Chynchen and Steve Coombes of 2002 fame — got the ball rolling and Roger Cole was requested to contribute his experience with "bells" (...and bell-bottoms, but that's another story!) and in the light of his working relationship with Steve at St John's 12 years ago.



PHOTO 6 — Bell striking hammer mechanism for No. 7 Bell

A protracted interchange of emails followed, initially around a proposal involving an engineer for Gillett & Johnston making a visit of several days to inspect and report on the condition of the Chime and its operating system. Finally, it was decided to focus on the Apollo II Quartz Master Clock, as the most likely source of malfunction and it was dismantled and sent to Croydon via DHL courier on 1st September 2014.

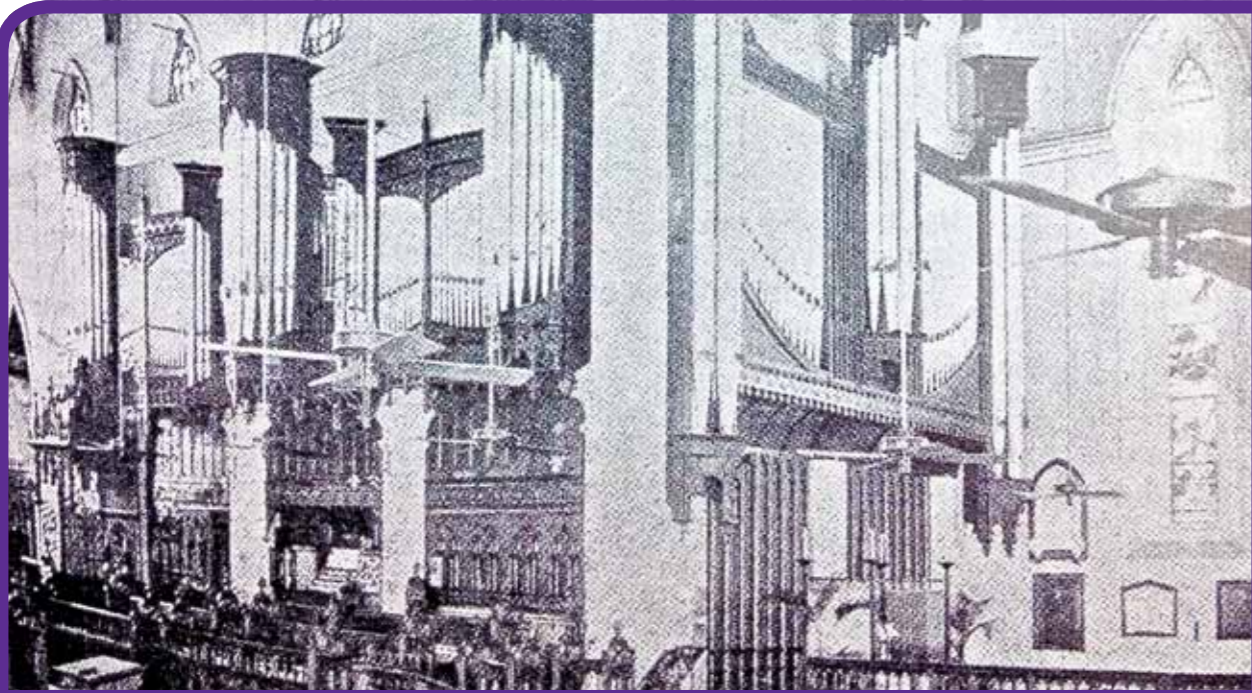
Roger Cole took delivery of the new Apollo II (Photo 5 — the new one, not the old look-alike!) on 20th October and it was installed two days later. The system was switched on without any problems but for a minor hitch with the programming of the PIM, resolved by exchanging with a new PIM from Croydon on 7th November 2014.

St John's Cathedral's Westminster Chimes are once again giving forth melodious time in the heart of Central.

Attributed source: *St John's Review*, Volume 62 Number 6, June 1994

Piping Up Since 1852

Following a recent breakdown of the organ in St John's, choir historian Thomas Li tells the story of the Cathedral's organs, from the beginning.



A rarely seen image of the 1927 organ completely filling today's St Michael's Chapel

The Cathedral's Allen organ broke down again at the beginning of October. The technicians said it would take a while for the American manufacturer to send the replacement parts. A temporary 3 manual organ console by Rodgers stood in during the wait. This instrument was installed in 2001 and has been meeting the Cathedral's musical needs for more than a decade. In recent years, however, it has created nerve-wracking moments for the organists, either by becoming a silent organ that seemed to have given up the ghost, or by ciphering (a continuous sounding of notes the organist did not intend) in the middle of playing. We hope the defects can soon be remedied.

Throughout the Cathedral's history, the organs have caught considerable attention through their technological advancement, and the continual engineering challenges presented by their maintenance and preservation. A Seraphine organ was very likely the first keyboard instrument acquired after the Cathedral opened for divine service in 1849. The 1855-1856 Cathedral accounts say the instrument cost 51 dollars to repair in the years 1852-1853. An edition of The Musical Times in 1918 confirms that the Cathedral had its first organ about 1852. Later a harmonium was bought for 19 dollars, possibly from the Navy.

Hongkong Daily Press.

ESTABLISHED 1857.

Registered as a Newspaper at the General Post Office in the United Kingdom.

第貳萬壹千號 丁未年二月十一日 星期五 香港 1927年2月11日 星期五

TON RAILWAY TABLE.

H. O. E.		H. O. E.	
M. A.M.	P.M.	M. A.M.	P.M.
10.50	12.00	1.15	2.35
10.55	12.05	1.20	2.40
11.00	12.10	1.25	2.45
11.05	12.15	1.30	2.50
11.10	12.20	1.35	2.55
11.15	12.25	1.40	3.00
11.20	12.30	1.45	3.05
11.25	12.35	1.50	3.10
11.30	12.40	1.55	3.15
11.35	12.45	2.00	3.20
11.40	12.50	2.05	3.25
11.45	12.55	2.10	3.30
11.50	13.00	2.15	3.35
11.55	13.05	2.20	3.40
12.00	13.10	2.25	3.45

ST. JOHN'S CATHEDRAL ORGAN. DEDICATION NEXT WEEK. A SHORT HISTORY.

As announced recently, the dedication of the reconstructed organ of St. John's Cathedral is to take place on Wednesday evening. In this connection a most interesting illustrated booklet, giving the form of service to be used at the dedication, together with a short history of the organ, a description

BUSINESS IN RUSSIA. ARRESTS AND TRANSPORTATION. ALLEGED PROFITEERS.

A message from Leningrad reports that wholesale arrests of business men have taken place on a charge made by the Soviet authorities that they sold goods at speculative prices. All their property, it is stated, will be confiscated for the benefit of the State, and the men themselves will be transported to Siberia. It is reported

THE WEEK'S DIARY.

To-day, H.K. Hotel tea dance, 4.30 p.m. Hotel Savoy tea dance, 4.30 p.m. Dance, U.S.R.C., 9 p.m. Fancy Dress Ball, Peak Club, 8.30 p.m. Queen's Theatre: "La Boheme." World Theatre: "Long Live The King." Star Theatre: "Wife of the

THE HONGKONG AND SHANGHAI

Howland Hotel; Raphael Bay Hotel. Park Hotel. Telegraphic Address: "KREMLIN, HONGKONG." AND SHANGHAI. Arrow House Hotel; Palace Hotel; Maxwell Hotel. Telegraphic Address:

1927 Front Page. Must have been a quiet news day!



The 1956 Compton Organ

In 1858, a decision was made to buy a pipe organ from Bryceson and Son in London. The 3 manual organ had 25 stops and 1,124 pipes. It finally arrived from England in December 1860. Fluctuations between excessive humidity and dryness in the local climate soon made the organ unusable. In 1864, an overhaul was urgently needed. The China Mail later reported that 'the working parts had fallen into such a state of disrepair, as to render many portions useless...upon opening the

instrument, the ravages made by rats and insects, and those arising from damp and unavoidable neglect were found to be serious. Also, the bellows and wind box had to be remade, and action from the keyboard to the pipes had to be renewed.' The overhaul was not completed until February 1868. Two years later, gas was introduced for the preservation of the organ. Heating up gas stoves in the organ chamber was thought to prevent damp.

In 1883, Mr Charles F A Sangster, the organist, pronounced the Bryceson organ 'past service'. A new organ with 35 stops and 2,228 pipes was obtained from J W Walker & Son in London. £2,000, about \$2.9 million today, was raised from a choral festival and elaborate Fete and Fancy Fairs at the Botanical Gardens to meet the total cost. It was formally inaugurated at the thanksgiving service for the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria on 21st June 1887. The Walker organ had a major overhaul in 1909 and was reconstructed in 1918 and 1927, after the instrument reached the stage where further patching up was impossible.



The present-day Allen Organ

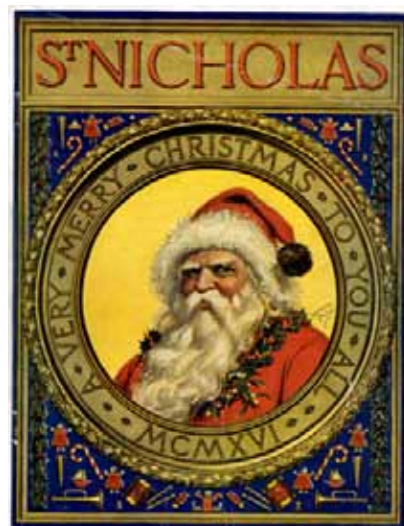
So far, gas had been used to preserve the pipe organ, but now two schools of thought contended, one saying the instrument should be kept damp and the other, the opposite. By the early 1930s, to prevent the wooden pipes from contracting and lessening the wind pressure, a huge concrete "tray" was constructed under the organ to hold about half an inch of water. The No. 1 coolie was instructed to fill it when a humidity drop was expected but that could never be forecast accurately. The late Dr Lindsay Lafford recalled that it inevitably became a mosquito breeding ground and the organist's ankles were constantly attacked. However, the preservation measure did not reverse the declining health of the organ and it was reconstructed again in 1937, the last time before the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong.

After the war, the church decided to acquire a Compton Electrone, an electronic organ, on the basis of cost and practicality. The cost of a new pipe organ would have been \$150,000 and it was felt that pipe organs had been too much of a financial burden. The existing and now ruined pipe organ was completely dismantled by October 1948. Thereafter, four more electronic organs were acquired at intervals of a decade or more. In 1966, a Thomas Church Organ Electrone was bought, which marked a departure from buying British made organs. A 3 manual, 50 stop Allen Digital Computer Organ 632-3 was installed in 1979. It promised to produce an authentic pipe organ sound due to the technological breakthrough in large-scale integrated circuits. This was followed by a 3-manual, 83 stop Allen ADC8350A Drawknobs Computer organ in 1989, which was replaced by the present Allen 4-manual Renaissance with 70 stops in 2001.



A stunning 1927 photo of the organ and Bishop's throne

IN TOUCH TAKES A LIGHT-HEARTED LOOK AT FATHER CHRISTMAS, ALSO KNOWN AS ST NICHOLAS



One person you are bound to run into this Christmas season is Father Christmas. These days he seems to frequent shopping malls and garden centres. If he looks tired, just remember that he has been around a long time, and gone through a lot of transformations.

Father Christmas wasn't always the red-suited, white-bearded star of the retail trade that he is today. He began life as

Nicholas, born way back about AD260 in Patara, an important port on the southern coast of what is now Turkey. When his parents died and left him a fortune, Nicholas gave it away to the poor. He became a bishop of the nearby city of Myra, where he almost certainly suffered persecution and imprisonment at the hand of the Roman Emperor Diocletian.

Nicholas was a serious theologian: he was a participant at the First Council of Nicaea, which formulated the Creed that we still say today. He even, reportedly, slapped another bishop in a squabble over the exact nature of the Trinity.

Nicholas died in Myra about AD343, but the stories of his generosity and kindness were just beginning. One enduring tale tells of the three girls whom he rescued from certain prostitution by giving them gold for their dowries. When the father confronted him to thank him, Nicholas said he should thank God alone.

In the UK, Nicholas became the basis for Father Christmas, who emerged in Victorian times as a jolly-faced bearded character. Meanwhile, Dutch and German settlers had taken him to America with them as Sinter Klaas and Sankt Nicklas.

It was in America that Nicholas received his final two great breaks into real stardom. The first was when the Rev Clement C Moore, a New York Episcopal minister, turned from his life-work of writing a Hebrew/English lexicon, to write a fun poem for his children one Christmas. His 'The Visit of St Nicholas' is now universally known by its first line: 'T'was the Night Before Christmas'.

From Clement Moore we discovered that St Nicholas is round and pink-cheeked and white-bearded, and that he travels at night with sleigh, reindeer and a sack of toys on his back. It was Clement Moore who also revealed that St Nicholas enters houses down chimneys and fills children's stockings with toys and sweets.

So how did we find out that Father Christmas wears red? Well, it was the U.S. Coca-Cola advertising campaign of 1931 that finally released the latest, up-to-date pictures of Father Christmas wearing a bright red, fur-trimmed coat and a large belt.

These days, it is good that Father Christmas uses reindeer and doesn't have to pay for petrol. In order to get round all the children in the world on Christmas Eve, he will have to travel 221 million miles at an average speed of 1279 miles a second, 6,395 times the speed of sound. For all those of us who are exhausted just rushing around getting ready for Christmas, that is a sobering thought.

Editor's Note: In Touch sourced this article from The Parish Pump (UK) and gratefully acknowledges permission to reproduce it here. The accompanying image of St Nicholas is copyright and reproduced here by kind permission from the St Nicholas Center, Michigan, USA. You can learn more about Nicholas by visiting the Center's website: www.stnicholascenter.org

ADVENT & CHRISTMASTIDE SAINTS

by Nigel Gibson

Some of the Church's best-known saints are celebrated in the seasons of Advent and Christmas. On the opposite page you can read more about the popular Greek saint, Nicholas of Myra, loved for his patronage of children, justice and charity. In the West, his feast day is 6th December.

Next day on 7th December, the Church remembers Ambrose, the great 4th century bishop of Milan. A man of pure character, vigorous mind and uncommon generosity, his spirituality and liturgical reforms are still of significance to this day. Ambrose is the patron saint of Milan and also of academics, candle makers and beekeepers!

A week later on 14th December the Church honours John of the Cross. When imprisoned for expressing his reforming beliefs, he produced some of the world's most inspired mystical poetry, e.g., *The Spiritual Canticle* and *Dark Night of the Soul*.

The day after Christmas day (yes, Boxing Day) is also the Feast of Stephen, a deacon of the Church and its first martyr. (No, the Church didn't work him to death - he had a much nastier end!) Stephen was one of the first seven deacons of the Church and was chosen to look after the allocation of alms to the poor and to preach the gospel.

The little we know about Stephen comes from the 6th and 7th chapters of Acts of the Apostles. His famous challenge to the Jews strongly suggests that he was not only articulate but also familiar with Scripture and the history of Judaism.

On the day of his martyrdom Stephen pulled no punches. He told the Jews that God didn't depend on the Temple, that it was a passing institution and would be superseded by the Righteous

One. He then accused his hearers of resisting the Holy Spirit and of betraying and murdering Christ, as their fathers before them had killed the prophets. The Jews were so incensed that they stoned Stephen on the spot for blasphemy.

Stephen is patron saint of many churches, schools, and institutions around the world (including St Stephen's Chapel, Stanley) as well as that of deacons, horses and coffin makers. He's also the patron saint of headache sufferers, so if you're prone to migraines then Stephen's your man!

The Feast of John the Apostle and Evangelist is celebrated on 27th December. He was one of Christ's original twelve apostles and possibly the only one who reached old age and not killed for his faith. A giant of the Church, he is the patron saint of booksellers, publishers, theologians, and many other professions.

The Church honours these and other saints because they responded to God's invitation to holiness. Today we are God's holy ones, we are his holy people; not because we ourselves are holy, but because God is holy and we are connected to him as he is to us.



The East window in St Stephen's Chapel, Stanley



A fresco of the *Stoning of St Stephen* (c.1435) in Siena Cathedral by Paolo Uccello (1375-1495). The artist vividly portrays both the horror of Stephen's imminent death and his serene peace with himself and God

AS 2014 DRAWS TO A CLOSE, WORLDWIDE PERSECUTION OF CHRISTIANS IS GROWING.

As the year draws to a close, let's remember in our prayers the millions of Christians who live in various parts of the Muslim world. Many of these are facing persecution, and thousands of them have been martyred for their faith during 2014 alone.

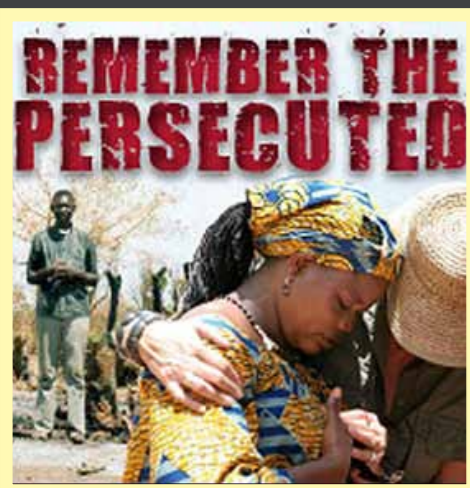
The Archbishop of Canterbury has said that since the rise of Islamic State, Christian communities that have existed "in many cases since the days of St Paul" are now under threat in countries such as Syria and Egypt.

To give just two of many dozens of examples: in Egypt during August alone, around 100 Christian sites were attacked, and 42 churches burnt to the ground. In September All Saints' Anglican church in

Peshawar, Pakistan was bombed, killing 85 and injuring more than 200 people. Similar horrific stories abound.

The Most Revd Justin Welby, who leads almost 80 million Anglicans around the world, said that despite the persecution, it was right that Christians should continue to pray for the terrorists. "As Christians, one of the things is that we pray for justice and particularly the issues around the anger that comes from this kind of killing. But we are also called as Jesus did at the Cross, to pray for those who are doing us harm."

Editor's Note: In Touch sourced this article from The Parish Pump (UK) and gratefully acknowledges permission to reproduce it here.



Advent & Christmas Services at St John's & Daughter Churches



St John's Cathedral

30 November: First Sunday of Advent *(Sunday Services as normal)*

18:00 'Looking for the Light'
A service for the beginning of Advent

7 December: Second Sunday of Advent *(Sunday Services as normal)*

11:45 Jesse Tree Service

14 December: Third Sunday of Advent *(Sunday Services as normal)*

18:00 'Blue Christmas Eucharist'
A service for those mourning a loss this Christmas season

20 December (Saturday)

18:00 Cantonese Sung Eucharist with Carols

21 December: Fourth Sunday of Advent *(Sunday Services as normal)*

09:00 Sung Eucharist with Sunday School Pageant
18:00 Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

24 December: Christmas Eve

15:00 Short Crib Service
17:00 Christingle Service
23:00 Midnight Mass of the Nativity & Blessing of the Crib

Please note that a seat in the Cathedral for Midnight Mass is by ticket only. Further details will be published on the website.

25 December: Christmas Day

08:00 Said Eucharist
09:00 Sung Eucharist
10:30 Sung Eucharist (Mandarin)
11:45 Christmas All Age Worship
14:00 Sung Eucharist (Filipino)

28 December: First Sunday of Christmas *(Sunday Services as normal)*

18:00 Christmas Choral Evensong

31 December: New Year's Eve

23:00 Watchnight Eucharist
A service to welcome in the New Year

Emmanuel Church Béthanie Chapel 139 Pok Fu Lam Road, Pokfulam

14 December: Third Sunday of Advent
18:30 Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols with Die Konzertisten Choir

24 December: Christmas Eve
23:00 Midnight Mass

25 December: Christmas Day
10:15 Family Sung Eucharist with Carols



St Stephen's Chapel 22 Tung Tau Wan Road, Stanley

14 December: Third Sunday of Advent
18:00 Christmas Lessons & Carols by Candlelight

24 December: Christmas Eve
17:00 Crib Service
23:00 Midnight Mass

25 December: Christmas Day
10:00 Christmas Family Communion



Discovery Bay Church Wei Lun Primary School, Discovery Bay

7 December: Second Sunday of Advent
10:00 Nine Lessons and Carols Service

21 December: Fourth Sunday of Advent
16:00 Nativity in the Plaza

24 December: Christmas Eve
18:00 Nativity Play & Christingle Service
23:00 Bilingual Midnight Mass with the Church of the Incarnation

25 December: Christmas Day
10:00 Family Eucharist



OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS

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.

6 December, Saturday
11:00 St Stephen's Chapel Fête, Stanley
Venue: Sports ground, St Stephen's College (Entrance on Wong Ma Kok Road)

17 December, Wednesday
20:00 Die Konzertisten presents a John Rutter Gala Concert: *What sweeter music can we bring than Rutter's carols and Magnificat?*

28 December, Sunday
18:30 World Aids Day Celebration at Café 8

8 February, Sunday
HDH Annual Fundraising Walk (departs from St John's at 09:00)



The First Christmas

Medium: crayon & colour pencil on paper
Artist: Charlotte McKeown (aged 11)
Charlotte attends St Stephen's Chapel Sunday School.
Her artwork appeared on the front cover of the St John's 2014 Christmas card.

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Dean

The Very Revd Matthias Der

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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2014