



## Apostolic pilgrimage Jerusalem 1964 — 2014



ON THE OCCASION OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE HISTORICAL MEETING OF POPE PAUL VI AND ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH ATHENAGORAS ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES, ARCHBISHOP JOB TELMESSOS ACCOMPANIED THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW IN JERUSALEM FROM THE 23RD TO THE 27TH OF MAY IN JERUSALEM. PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW AND POPE FRANCIS MET TWICE DURING THIS TIME.

A FIRST ONE-TO-ONE MEETING BETWEEN POPE FRANCIS AND THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW WAS HELD ON MAY 25TH FOLLOWED BY THE CELEBRATION OF THE GOSPEL IN THE HOLY SEPULCHER. UPON CONCLUSION OF THIS MEETING, POPE FRANCIS AND HIS ALL HOLINESS SIGNED A JOINT DECLARATION (SEE BELOW). THEY STRESS THE NEED TO MOVE TOWARDS THE RESTORATION OF FULL COMMUNION BETWEEN THE TWO CHURCHES, PROMOTE FAMILY BASED ON MARRIAGE, CARE FOR CREATION AND TO PRAY FOR PEACE IN THE WORLD.

ON THE FOURTH DAY OF HIS APOSTOLIC PILGRIMAGE, ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW VISITED THE MUSEUM OF ISRAEL BEFORE MEETING POPE FRANCIS A SECOND TIME AT THE SUMMER RESIDENCE OF THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM AT THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.



## Common Declaration of pope Francis and the patriarch Bartholomew 25 mai 2014

- 1. Like our venerable predecessors Pope Paul VI and Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras who met here in Jerusalem fifty years ago, we too, Pope Francis and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, were determined to meet in the Holy Land “where our common Redeemer, Christ our Lord, lived, taught, died, rose again, and ascended into Heaven, whence he sent the Holy Spirit on the infant Church” (Common communiqué of Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras, published after their meeting of 6 January 1964). Our meeting, another encounter of the Bishops of the Churches of Rome and Constantinople founded respectively by the two Brothers the Apostles Peter and Andrew, is a source of profound spiritual joy for us. It presents a providential occasion to reflect on the depth and



From the 23rd to the 27th of May, I had the honour of accompanying His Holiness our Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew in Jerusalem as part of an apostolic pilgrimage organized with His Holiness Pope Francis. The pilgrimage was organized especially to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the historical meeting in the Holy Land by Pope Paul VI and Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras of January 1964. At that time, winter most suitably expressed the cold relations between our churches. However, this historical meeting helped bring our churches together in charity, and initiated a dialogue of theological truth. Tremendous progress has been made in our relationships and our dialogue. Meeting in spring, during the paschal period suggested hope and renewal. Aside from the fraternal gestures that will remain forever etched in the memory of the faithful - helping our Patriarch Pope go down the stairs; the Pope kissing the right hand of our Patriarch following his speech; the two Primates praying together, knelt before the Holy Tomb of Christ - confirm the commitment of Bartholomew and Francis to continue theological dialogue in order to, at the appropriate time, restore full communion between our Churches.

*+ Job of Telmessos*

the authenticity of our existing bonds, themselves the fruit of a grace-filled journey on which the Lord has guided us since that blessed day of fifty years ago.

2. Our fraternal encounter today is a new and necessary step on the journey towards the unity to which only the Holy Spirit can lead us, that of communion in legitimate diversity. We call to mind with profound gratitude the steps that the Lord has already enabled us to undertake. The embrace exchanged between Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras here in Jerusalem, after many centuries of silence, paved the way for a momentous gesture, the removal from the memory and from the midst of the Church of the acts of mutual excommunication in 1054. This was followed by an exchange of visits between the respective Sees of Rome and Constantinople, by regular correspondence and, later, by the decision announced by Pope John Paul II and Patriarch Dimitrios, of blessed memory both, to initiate a theological dialogue of truth between Catholics and Orthodox. Over these years, God, the source of all peace and love, has taught us to regard one another as members of the same Christian family, under one Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, and to love one another, so that we may confess our faith in the same Gospel of Christ, as received by the Apostles and expressed and transmitted to us by the Ecumenical Councils and the Church Fathers. While fully aware of not having reached the goal of full communion, today we confirm our commitment to continue walking together towards the unity for which

Christ our Lord prayed to the Father so "that all may be one" (Jn 17:21).

3. Well aware that unity is manifested in love of God and love of neighbour, we look forward in eager anticipation to the day in which we will finally partake together in the Eucharistic banquet. As Christians, we are called to prepare to receive this gift of Eucharistic communion, according to the teaching of Saint Irenaeus of Lyon (Against Heresies, IV,18,5, PG 7,1028), through the confession of the one faith, persevering prayer, inner conversion, renewal of life and fraternal dialogue. By achieving this hoped for goal, we will manifest to the world the love of God by which we are recognized as true disciples of Jesus Christ (cf. Jn 13:35).

4. To this end, the theological dialogue undertaken by the Joint International Commission offers a fundamental contribution to the search for full communion among Catholics and Orthodox. Throughout the subsequent times of Popes John Paul II and Benedict the XVI, and Patriarch Dimitrios, the progress of our theological encounters has been substantial. Today we express heartfelt appreciation for the achievements to date, as well as for the current endeavours. This is no mere theoretical exercise, but an exercise in truth and love that demands an ever deeper knowledge of each other's traditions in order to understand them and to learn from them. Thus we affirm once again that the theological dialogue does not seek a theological lowest common denominator on which to reach a compromise, but is rather about deepening one's grasp of the whole truth that Christ has given to



his Church, a truth that we never cease to understand better as we follow the Holy Spirit's promptings. Hence, we affirm together that our faithfulness to the Lord demands fraternal encounter and true dialogue. Such a common pursuit does not lead us away from the truth; rather, through an exchange of gifts, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, it will lead us into all truth (cf. Jn 16:13).

5. Yet even as we make this journey towards full communion we already have the duty to offer common witness to the love of God for all people by working together in the service of humanity, especially in defending the dignity of the human person at every stage of life and the sanctity of family based on marriage, in promoting peace and the common good, and in responding to the suffering that continues to afflict our world. We acknowledge that hunger, poverty, illiteracy, the inequitable distribution of resources must constantly be addressed. It is our duty to seek to build together a just and humane society in which no-one feels excluded or emarginated.

6. It is our profound conviction that the future of the human family depends also on how we safeguard – both prudently and compassionately, with justice and fairness – the gift of creation

that our Creator has entrusted to us. Therefore, we acknowledge in repentance the wrongful mistreatment of our planet, which is tantamount to sin before the eyes of God. We reaffirm our responsibility and obligation to foster a sense of humility and moderation so that all may feel the need to respect creation and to safeguard it with care. Together, we pledge our commitment to raising awareness about the stewardship of creation; we appeal to all people of goodwill to consider ways of living less wastefully and more frugally, manifesting less greed and more generosity for the protection of God's world and the benefit of His people.

7. There is likewise an urgent need for effective and committed cooperation of Christians in order to safeguard everywhere the right to express publicly one's faith and to be treated fairly when promoting that which Christianity continues to offer to contemporary society and culture. In this regard, we invite all Christians to promote an authentic dialogue with Judaism, Islam and other religious traditions. Indifference and mutual ignorance can only lead to mistrust and unfortunately even conflict.

8. From this holy city of Jerusalem, we express our shared profound concern for the situation of Christians in the Middle East and for their right to remain full citizens of their homelands. In trust we turn to the almighty and merciful God in a prayer for peace in the Holy Land and in the Middle East in general. We especially pray for the Churches in Egypt, Syria, and Iraq, which have suffered most grievously due to recent events. We encourage all parties regardless of their religious convictions to continue to work for reconciliation and for the just recognition of peoples' rights. We are persuaded that it is not arms, but dialogue, pardon and reconciliation that are the only possible means to achieve peace.

9. In an historical context marked by violence, indifference and egoism, many men and women today feel that they have lost their bearings. It is precisely through our common witness to the good news of the Gospel that we may be able to help the people of our time to rediscover the way that leads to truth, justice and peace. United in our intentions, and recalling the example, fifty years ago here in Jerusalem, of Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras, we call upon all Christians, together with believers of every religious tradition and all people of good will, to recognize the urgency of the hour that compels us to seek the reconciliation and unity of the human family, while fully respecting legitimate differences, for the good of all humanity and of future generations.

10. In undertaking this shared pilgrimage to the site where our one same Lord Jesus Christ was crucified, buried and rose again, we humbly commend to the intercession of the Most Holy and Ever Virgin Mary our future steps on the path towards the fullness of unity, entrusting to God's infinite love the entire human family. « May the Lord let his face shine upon you, and be gracious to you! The Lord look upon you kindly and give you peace! » (Num 6:25-26).

Jerusalem, 25 May 2014

**Article Florence errata no. 67 p. 8 :**

Indeed, interreligious dialogue is a very important concept in Florence, emphasizing that the city occupies a historical perspective in the attempt to bring the Eastern and Western Churches into the unionist Council of 1442.

**The Council of Florence is not an «ecumenical» council but a «unionist» council.**

## PASTORAL VISIT ON THE SOUTH-EAST OF FRANCE.

ON THE 9TH AND 10TH OF MAY 2014, ARCHBISHOP JOB OF TELMESSOS WENT ON A PASTORAL VISIT TO THE SOUTH-EAST OF FRANCE. ON THE EVENING OF THE 9TH OF MAY, HE VISITED THE PARISH OF THE TOWN OF SAINT-RAPHAEL. THE NEXT DAY ARCHBISHOP JOB PRESIDED AT THE DIVINE LITURGY IN THE CHURCH OF THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST IN TOULON, ACCOMPANIED BY FATHERS JEAN GUEIT, (DEAN OF THE SOUTH-EAST), CONSTANTIN PAPAOKSMAS (OF THE GREEK PARISH OF TOULON), ANDRÉ BORRÉLY (OF THE FRENCH LANGUAGE PARISH OF MARSEILLE UNDER THE GREEK METROPOLITAN), SERGE HERASYMENKO (THE PARISH PRIEST) AND JEAN GAUTHIER (OF MARSEILLES, PATRIARCHATE OF MOSCOW), AND THE DEACONS OLEG SHABASH AND ANDRÉ (OF THE GREEK PARISH OF TOULON). AFTER THE PROCESSION ON THE OCCASION OF THE PATRONAL FESTIVAL, A CONCERT BY THE CHILDREN OF THE PARISH AND A MEAL WERE ORGANISED IN THE GARDENS OF THE CHURCH.

### The Parish of St. Raphael the Archangel (town of St Raphael, France-Var 83)

We thank Archbishop Job of Telmessos who, on Friday 9th May 2014, honoured us with his presence for the celebration of vespers, accompanied by Fr Jean Gueit, rector of our parish, Archpriest Igor Koritskiy and Fr Serge from the church in Toulon. It was a very important event in a parish like ours which welcomes the Faithful of many emigrated nationalities and who are dispersed in different towns throughout the Var. It is also a privileged place for new migrants from Eastern Europe. So, on that day, the kind words of our Archbishop allowed our community to unite with a real feeling of sharing. At the end of this celebration, the tonsure of Serge Dubouis as a reader was another important moment. The dinner buffet which followed again allowed us to appreciate the ability to listen and the openness of spirit of Archbishop Job, in the joy of Christ Resurrected.

*Claude and Micheline*



## IN MEMORIAM : FATHER JEAN DE VAERE

FATHER JEAN DE VAERE, SERVING PRIEST IN THE PARISHES OF LIÈGE AND BRUSSELS, FELL ASLEEP IN THE LORD IN BRUSSELS IN THE EVENING OF JUNE 2 AFTER A PAINFUL ILLNESS.



THE FUNERAL WILL BE CELEBRATED ON FRIDAY JUNE 6 AT 11.00 IN THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF SAINT JOB (RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OUT OF RUSSIA), AVENUE DE FRÉ IN BRUSSELS. THE BURIAL WILL TAKE PLACE ROUND 15.00 AT THE CEMETERY OF BRAINE-L'ALLEUD (WALLOON BRABANT)

ARCHBISHOP JOB OF TELMESSOS EXPRESSES HIS CONDOLENCES TO THE SPOUSE AND FAMILY OF FATHER JEAN OF BLESSED MEMORY AND PRAYS THE LORD TO RECEIVE HIS HUMBLE SERVANT IN HIS KINGDOM. ETERNAL MEMORY!

### Father Jean De Vaere (1952-2014)

- Born in Brussels in 1952, in a active Protestant family, Father Jean De Vaere means to become a minister and starts theological studies.
- In 1977, his meeting with Father Dimitri Khvostoff, rector at the Saint Job parish in Brussels is decisive. He is then accepted into the Orthodox Faith during Pentecost that same year, in the parish of Saints Cosmas and Damian.
- In January 1978, he marries Monique Descamps, and together they engage actively in the parish life, under the aegis of Father Marc Nicaise, him as a Deacon, her as a 'regent'.
- In 1989, Father Jean starts learning the Slavonic and Russian languages under the aegis of His Eminence Archbishop Serge Konovaloff, then still rector of the parish of Saints Panteleimon and Nicholas in Brussels, and is ordained as a Priest on March 1, 1991.
- He then officiates in this parish, but also in the parishes of Saint Nicholas in Lille, Saint Alexander Nevski in Liège and Saints John Chrysostom and Servatius in Maastricht.
- We will of course always remember his abundant generosity and his strong sense of humour, his unswerving friendship, but also his great availability and ability to listen to all his parishioners, the wealth of his knowledge in the matters of spirituality and the Church, and how he always guided his flock with all his heart.

# The *matushki's* meeting: a first in the history of the Archbishopric!

IN THE FRAME OF THE PASTORAL ASSEMBLY OF MAY 1, 2014, THE NEW ARCHBISHOP JOB GETCHA AND THE ARCHBISHOPRIC'S COUNCIL HAD INVITED THE WIVES OF PRIESTS AND DEACONS TO ATTEND THE MEETING. A FIRST IN OUR ARCHBISHOPRIC!

TWO MEETINGS WERE DEDICATED TO THE «MATUSHKI». A FIRST ONE IN THE MORNING, FACILITATED BY ARCHBISHOP JOB, WHICH GATHERED 21 WIVES OF PRIESTS AND DEACONS, AND A SECOND IN THE AFTERNOON, HOSTED BY THE PROFESSOR OF HOMILETICS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALONIKI, MRS DIMITRA KOUKOURA.

AFTER THE CELEBRATION OF THE DIVINE LITURGY, ATTENDED BY ALL THE PARTICIPANTS, THE WIVES OF PRIESTS GATHERED WITH HIS EMINENCE JOB FOR AN INFORMAL MEETING, WHICH ENABLED US TO GET TO KNOW OUR NEW ARCHBISHOP, BUT ALSO EACH OTHER.

We were about twenty women, of diverse origins, either geographical or familial, some were «born in the Orthodoxy», others came into it later through unexpected and varied paths... During a round-table discussion, each of us could share her story, challenges, satisfactions, expectations and questions. In spite of age differences and diverse parochial contexts, we have discovered many common aspects in our situations. In Western society, priests' wives do not really have a position and their situation is ambiguous. A *matushka*, said His Eminence Job, is a «person in the shadow», who generally supports her husband diligently and with devotion. But, if it speaks for itself that the ordained man has duties and obligations inside the Church, things are different for his wife who has not been ordained, and determines herself her behaviour and actions, according to her own abilities. Catechises, singing, baking prosphora, iconography, sewing liturgical vestments, preparing feasts, etc., are all activities in which we can engage, without them to

be an obligation for us, as His Eminence Job emphasized.

Various questions were raised, such as a possible family unbalance, which can establish when the priest-father is absorbed by his pastoral work (often on top of his professional duties); then bringing up the children rests solely on the mother. Children suffer from such situations, and might sometimes leave the Church as a reaction.

Other challenges were mentioned, and we have all expressed our wish for such a consultation to be held again, in order for us to better reflect on them and share our experiences and ideas.

Before leaving, His Eminence Job recommended us to take care of our husbands' health, so that they do not get exhausted, as they are meant to serve the Church properly, without neglecting their families...

After a lunch (shared with «the men»), we listened to the very dynamic Mrs Koukoura, professor of homiletics in Thessaloniki.

As one of the Orthodox representatives in the World Council of Churches, she based her presentation on the place of women in the Orthodox Church.

Mrs Koukoura started her speech by paying a tribute to Elisabeth Behr-Sigel, a pioneer in this matter. She then explained to us how, under the influence of the WCC (predominantly Protestant), that the Orthodox were pressed to undertake a theological reflection on subjects that had never been discussed so far, such as the ordination of women. Consequently, orthodox theologians started to study the role of deaconesses in the primitive Church, and to consider a possible restoring of this function.

Having emphasized on the fact that theology has to provide answers that the contemporaries will be able to accept, Mrs Koukoura concluded by reminding us that it is to women that the Resurrection was announced. It is up to them to find out how to pass on this testimony now.

*Anne-Marie Guéit*



## **Matouchki's meeting :**

The first meeting enabled the priests' and deacons' wives to get know each other and to share on various subjects. First of all, it is always a great joy to see each other, to make new acquaintances and share some ideas. Becoming a priest's wife is not easy: there is a great disparity between the capital and the provinces, between originally orthodox backgrounds or newly orthodox backgrounds, differences with regard to the other women, some sort of loneliness. According to the way priesthood is

practised by the husband, women can have a very important responsibility in the children's education, and the household's income. But there is also the importance for the *matushka* to have her own personal and professional activities and to be able to delegate tasks in order to avoid becoming endlessly 'exploitable'...

His Eminence Job reminded us that it is also the matushka's role to take care of the priest's health. Sometimes priests are exhausted and the family atmosphere can become tense. It is not unusual for priest's children, once teenagers, to drift away from the Church. And this is a major issue!

This round-table talk enabled us not only to get to know what is happening in the other parishes, but also to discuss together everyone's roles and tasks, to share about the life of Orthodox communities in the world today.

The afternoon, chaired by Mrs Dimitra Koukoura, was dedicated to the role of women in the Church. Dimitra Koukoura started by sketching a summary of the questions on the subject that have been debated for the last sixty years. She recalled the discussions at a European level: the approach relating to the ordination of women in Protestant circles, the Acts of Rhodes,

during which some questions were raised. She also recalled the research of Elisabeth Behr-Sigel, Fr. Thomas Hopko and The Rt. Rev. Kallistos Ware.

The IVth Ecumenical Council already underlines the fact that everything was given to both men and women. Though, these gifts differ. In the course of History, in different cultures, the role of women has been marginalised, not because of Faith, but for sociological reasons. Thirty years ago, the first wish of women was to gain access to theological studies.

To conclude, we were reminded that we don't live between ourselves, but in front of the others, and that we are called to be witnesses!

The Truth is that Christ is risen and, as a consequence, as a friend once said, «it changes everything».

*Barbara Yagello*

## Freedom in Christ

Deanery conference - deanery of Great Britain and Ireland

23-26 Mai



ONCE AGAIN MEMBERS OF OUR MULTINATIONAL, POLYGLOT DEANERY GATHERED AT HIGH LEIGH CONFERENCE CENTRE. WE WERE JOINED BY VISITORS FROM OUTSIDE THESE ISLANDS; IT WAS PARTICULARLY GOOD TO WELCOME BRIGITTE AND MICHEL SOLLOGOUB FROM PARIS, OUR THEME WAS FREEDOM IN CHRIST. ADULTS EXPLORED THIS IN A SERIES OF TALKS AND DISCUSSIONS WHILE THERE WAS A SEPARATE PROGRAMME FOR THE YOUNGER MEMBERS.

THIS REPORT CAN ONLY BE SPECIFIC ABOUT THE OLDER SECTION OF THE CONFERENCE. EVIDENCE OF THE SUCCESS OF THE YOUNGER SECTION WAS PROVIDED BY THE PROSPHORA WHICH THEY BAKED FOR THE SUNDAY LITURGY, THE MUSIC AND CAKES FOR OUR LAST NIGHT PARTY, AND THE GENERAL ATMOSPHERE OF JOY IN LIFE WHICH THEY ALL, TEENAGERS TO TODDLERS, SPREAD AROUND THEM.



Karin Greenhead got us off to a good start by making us think and talk to one another about some of the many scriptural references to freedom and the questions they raised. Fr David Gill talked on Barriers to Freedom. In the first of the weekend's many references to Metropolitan Anthony he showed how piety can make us lose touch with God and become a barrier to freedom. Drawing on his experience as a psychologist he drew a distinction between true and false selves. It is the true self which is baptised into Christ and enters eternal life. A paper by Barbara Bates developed the psychological theme. Much discussion followed on how true and false self could be expressed in a better way and how the Liturgy should lead us into silence and into God.

Fr Christopher Knight took us on an illustrated tour through modern theologians and the Fathers, beginning with attitudes to science and ways of reading both the Bible and the book of nature. He examined views about the nature of freedom and the possibility of freedom in inanimate nature, the Fall and the contrast between asceticism and puritanism. Spiritual warfare, we were told, is not an head to head conflict but more like judo. In the course of his talk Fr Christopher gave succinct accounts of the writings of Philip Sherard, Kallistos Ware, Pseudo-Dionysios, Maximos the Confessor and Gregory Palamas. He concluded by saying that we are free to the extent that we do the will of God spontaneously, that is when we act in accordance with our true natures, are free from internal constraints and see that created things are to be offered back to God in thankfulness.

Proto-deacon Peter Scorer and Irina von Schlippe spoke of Metropolitan Anthony on Freedom. Irina had compiled a catena of extracts from Metropolitan Anthony's talks drawn from the Russian edition of his collected works. She concluded by telling us how she had helped a group of sixth form girls to appreciate the Metropolitan's teaching on self-discipline by drawing a comparison with their own experience of the way they approached their sport and music. Fr Peter, under the heading of 'Seeing the Church as Metropolitan Anthony Saw It' gave us a moving account of Vlادica Anthony's work building up first a parish and then a diocese. He established the Conference the Assembly, the youth camps and undertook the long process of establishing Statutes. Those Statutes were based on the Moscow Sobor of 1917-18 and expressed a theological vision of what the Church should be, a Church rooted and grounded in love.

All our thinking and discussing, both in formal sessions and informally in groups and around meal tables, was set in a context of prayer. Music for Metropolitan Anthony's Panikhida, the Vigil, Liturgy, Vespers and a final Moleben was splendidly provided by a choir directed with her customary firmness by Annemarie Visser.

On the last night there was our usual party, enlivened by music from the young conference members which would have made an high quality concert in its own right. Music in a variety of traditions followed and two venerable looking clerics entranced us, one by songs and the other by a piece of high melodrama.

*Ian Randall*



YET AGAIN THE DEANERY OF THE UNITED KINGDOM CAME TOGETHER AT HIGH LEIGH CONFERENCE CENTRE JUST OUTSIDE LONDON TO MEET UP, TALK, CONFER AND REINFORCE OUR TIES WITH EACH OTHER THAT DURING THE YEAR CAN BE SO EASILY UNRAVELLED, STRETCHED, LOOSENED, AND LET GO.

This year I was able to travel with Fr Mark. Macbeth from the Dunblane parish and Michele Mapp, whom I have last met up with about 15 years ago at the Cathedral of the Dormition in Ennismore Gardens.

So much water under the bridge and, as we chatted during the drive to the conference, I realised how little I had taken the trouble to get to know her earlier, and how now, without small children in tow, I had the luxury of getting to know her better!

The weekend began with a lively session guided by Karin Greenhead, who introduced us to the theme of the conference, 'Freedom'.

We started with a range of Biblical and Gospel quotations to trigger off questions in our minds, which we were then encouraged to post up onto the walls.

We read out our questions, and got into groups lead by the person who had posed the question in the first place. This had the benefit of getting us talking amongst each other, and to people we had never spoken to before, mulling over questions about what we thought freedom was.

At that stage we still thought we're considering freedom without ties, but that illusion dissolved every time we dug even slightly further.

Being well fed and well watered later that evening, we attended our first service of the weekend. Over the duration of a conference one of the best things about it is worshipping and being able to follow a sequence of services together so that by the end of the weekend we feel more like a real church community than we did on Friday evening when we gather from four corners of the country and our various busy lives.

On Saturday we started to talk about Freedom more deeply, refreshed by sleep and Matins and of course a good breakfast, we started to think about how we are conditioned to discipline from the outset.

Fr David Gill gave us an interesting talk that explored some of the teaching Metropolitan Anthony expounded on Freedom, together with his own (Fr. David's) particular take on the extent to which we can realise freedom given our psychological experiences of life from childhood onwards. We also had a contribution from Barbara Bates read out, as she was unable to attend, that continued Fr David's theme.

The day continued with free time, and workshops after tea, that covered various topics.

### *Sunday is the feast day*

We attended the liturgy in the morning as a community.

The wonderful thing about the conference is that disparate groups of parishes who normally don't see each other during the year begin to accrete to become one parish and the body of Christ, the larger Ecclesia. Of course, our clergy meet on several occasions during the year, so they have other opportunities to get to know each other more deeply in a way that the lay members of the parishes cannot.

Sunday also gave us the delight of hearing Irina von Schlippe talking to us about some of the archived talks and teachings of M Anthony, that have been published in Russian, and which we in the UK do not have access to yet. She reminded us of how to achieve any semblance of Freedom in any endeavor, we actually have to focus and first submit to a discipline of training and learning before we can act with any freedom at all.



### *Our future : the Children of the Deanery*

The children followed a conference theme designed especially for them around the subject of food.

Viktor and Ginka Mastorides ran the programme the topic for the children's part of the conference this year was: "Food Glorious Food". On Friday evening they watched the DVD *Oliver!* On Saturday morning Fr.

John Musther presented a workshop on Prospora, then they made pancakes, Greek halva, butterfly cookies and banana cake.

Saturday afternoon, they prepared 40 Prospora that were used in the Liturgy the next day. Sunday they all prepared party food that was brought to the party and shared with everyone, this was delicious and they also sung us a few songs and some of the children played instruments. Again the talents of our children and their readiness to perform for us was touching and deeply moving.

### *Entertainment and fellowship*

Sunday is the day of celebration, and once vespers has been celebrated in the room the conference takes place in is over, we transform the room into a club/cabaret venue, and the fun begins.

Our children have always provided us with spectacular entertainment, and this year was no exception, with singing, playing the flute, piano, with Matuska Patsy Fostiropoulos leading the Koritsis of the parish, young and old, in a Greek dance, supported by our Cypriot

Greek girls who actually knew what they were meant to be doing with their feet.

We sang along with Father David Gill to the Hippopotamus song, which by now is a 'must' at conference fellowship events, and of course our singing in the choir and at services has paid off in bucket loads as we bellowed out the refrain... « Mud, Mud, Glorious Mud, there nothing quite like it for cooling the blood! »

### *Monday plenary*

On Monday parishes reported to the conference a general record of what they are all doing, some introduced themselves so that we begin to know each other more, and understand what talent and special people we have in the Deanery.

Then we had a last plenary session on the topic of the conference, Freedom, We re-visited our original thoughts, chewed over which chunks of knowledge and wisdom we had found particularly illuminating and some even put in new insights to help draw our conferring to some kind of conclusion.

Although, we only ever get going just as the conference is drawing to a close and as always there is never enough time to fill out the debate that has been begun by the conference, at least we have had a chance to link up with each other, key into the critical aspects of our lives and faith, and renew our understanding and beliefs that we try to live our lives by, and it is clear that we've only just got going!

*Edith*

