

A pilgrim people

MOST YEARS with a couple of companions I take a few days in May to walk a section of the Camino, the old pilgrimage route to Santiago de de Compostela in North West Spain. It is there that in 813 AD the local Bishop declared the apostle St James to have been buried, so turning the town into the premier (and a very lucrative) tourist destination for the Middle Ages.

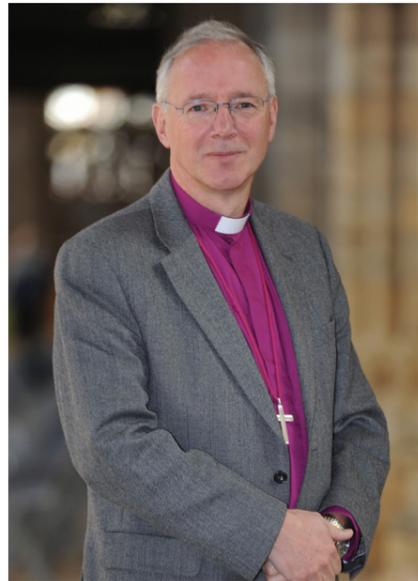
The route is well marked with scallop shells and yellow arrows, there are plenty of hostels along the way and we pass through medieval towns and villages

“ To follow Christ is not to stand still but to keep on the move, running with perseverance the race that is set before us. ”

some untouched by modern development, others with wonderful cathedrals and bustling markets. A friendly camaraderie exists among those on the peregrination, many of whom are serious pilgrims while others are simply out to enjoy a scenic walk.

There is something liberating about carrying all you need for life on your back. (I manage to get it down to 9 kgs. My companions have lighter rucksacks but worry less about changing their clothes!) The gentle rhythm of walking makes for easy conversation and quiet reflection, and thankfully there is little reception for mobile phones.

The idea of the Christian life as a pilgrim's progress goes back to the earliest days, perhaps even to Jesus inviting his hearers to take up their cross and follow him. Luke's gospel has the shape of a journey towards Jerusalem, and plenty of spiritual writers encourage us to think of an outer physical journey mirroring



The Rt Revd Nick McKinnel
Bishop of Crediton

an inner spiritual journey of the soul.

All have in common the idea of progress, that to follow Christ is not to stand still but to keep on the move, learning, growing, changing, running with perseverance the race that is set before us. We rightly enjoy the wonderful church buildings we have inherited in this Diocese. But within them and beyond, we are called to be a pilgrim people open to new vistas and experiences as we walk the way of Christ.

+ Nick

CHURCH OF ENGLAND DEVON

Lottery grant for Lundy

ST HELEN'S Church on the tiny island of Lundy, off the North Devon coast, has been awarded a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund to conserve and develop it into a new centre on the island for learning, research and worship.

Funding of £74,900 has been awarded to The St Helen's Centre Steering Group to help them progress their plans and a further £857,000 has been earmarked for the delivery of the project.

The church, owned by our diocese, is currently in a poor state of repair and the project plans to completely recover the roof, repoint the walls and relay the floors. As it has for the last 120 years, St Helen's will continue as a place of worship and a place where people can celebrate important



THE AMORY GREEN ROVERS, sitting firmly at the bottom of division seven of the Devon and Exeter Football League, remain positively upbeat in the face of constant defeat. The team made national and international headlines when their player manager Marc Hodsdon from Tiverton spoke out about his Christian ethos for running the team. Turn to page 3 for an interview with Marc.



Lundy's Landmark Trust workers outside St Helen's Church

events in their lives such as baptisms and marriages. This project will ensure that a Christian presence on Lundy, owned by the National Trust and managed by The Landmark Trust, will continue for generations to come, as it has for the last 1,300 years.

The new centre will also provide interpretation to help visitors learn more about the island's fascinating history and nationally important wildlife, as well as offering facilities for research and talks.

The Revd Shirley Henderson, Chair of the St Helen's Centre Steering Group said: "I have to confess to giving a 'whoop' of joy when I heard this news.

"It's a new beginning, a wonderful opportunity to continue the Revd Hudson Heaven's vision for a place of Christian presence on this very special island and a resource for all who visit it, especially the next generation."

More training: Thanks to those who joined us for our Parish Magazine Editors training day in February. Another day for editors is planned for 17 June from 10am – 1pm. The free event, which includes lunch, is an opportunity to get some good ideas about how to make the best of your magazine. A separate website training event will take place in the afternoon from 2-4.30pm focussing on creating the most effective website for your parish. To sign up for either of these events or both email Publications Officer Nicky Davies at nicky.davies@exeter.anglican.org

Power of prayer: Get involved in the National Day of Prayer for Police on 14 May. An event is being held from 10am-4pm in Exeter Cathedral with prayer slots available. Contact Lead Police Chaplain Sarah Jeffrey for details on 07720341614.

A 24/2 prayer weekend is taking place from 1-3 May in Chagford. The weekend begins with a big launch service and continues over the weekend with workshops and community events.

Christian Aid Week 10-16 May:

Look out for and support volunteers from over 200 churches across Devon who will be pounding the streets as part of Britain’s longest running door-to-door fundraising week. This year’s appeal focuses particularly on the plight of women who are living in poverty around the world. The week of cake sales, coffee mornings and collections across the diocese will close on 16 May with the annual Newton Abbot sponsored walk in Decoy Park. *Pictured: Ethiopian woman Loko who gathers and sells firewood to feed her family, is featured in this year’s materials. Visit www.caweek.org*



Play a role in the CofE’s parliament

THE GENERAL SYNOD is the national assembly of the Church of England. This summer we have the opportunity to send four Devon lay people and four clergy representatives to the General Synod for their next five year session. Nominations are being taken this summer and elections will take place in September.

Current member Anneliese Barrell says, “It has been a great privilege to serve on General Synod for fifteen years as a member of Exeter Diocese. Being a member enables one to gain a whole picture of how

the Church of England and its partners in the wider Anglican Communion work. The contacts and friendships made across the spectrum of the Church have been so valuable and enabled me to rejoice in its diversity. There have been some very difficult times and decisions to be made but thank God synod is presently in calmer waters and I look forward to the future with hope.”

Elected members will automatically become members of Diocesan and Deanery Synod as well as their PCC. For details visit www.tinyurl.com/synod2015

Faith and football

MARC HODSDON from Tiverton is the player manager of The Amory Green Rovers, a local Tiverton football team, who have been described in press coverage as ‘possibly the worst football team in Britain.’ This is because they haven’t yet won a game and sit at the bottom of the Devon and Exeter Football League.

However for Marc, who is a Christian, it’s not about the winning.

He says, “This is what we are about - to encourage the players to play to the best of their ability and for enjoyment. We are not a stereotypical team. We don’t raise our voices and I always hug the players after every game no matter what has happened.”

Marc used to manage the team 10 years ago but then took a break during which time he became a Christian through the care and

support shown through their local church of St Paul’s. Both his children were baptised there and he and his wife Lisa made a commitment to live with Christian values.

Marc says that although his players aren’t Christians they “have respect for me and my Christian ethos.”

And this philosophy is being noticed as Marc’s phone is often ringing with players wanting to join the team.

He says, “I believe God is working in the team and he has given me a vision for this team. I pray long and hard and give it to God. It’s not always easy being a Christian manager but we do find respect and now that respect has led to us trending on twitter and being reported on around the world.”

He finishes, “I don’t want to be an amazing side and it doesn’t bother me if we win or lose. We are all winners anyway!”

“It’s not always easy being a Christian manager, but we do find respect... and now that respect has led to us trending on twitter and being reported on around the world.”



Marc wearing his team shirt which supports local charities and wearing his Street Pastor hat



See Marc and Bishop Nick in films on the diocesan website www.exeter.anglican.org