

Bishop John Holbrook writes

The Hopes and Fears of all the Years

As a child I was always excited when the milometer on the car went from 999 to the next thousand and all the little wheels turned together from 999 to 000. As an adult I was so determined to see 99,999 become 100,000 that I carefully planned my route to ensure that I'd be in a safe place to drive really slowly and watch all six wheels turn together!

So it will not surprise to you to discover that I love New Year's Eve and enjoy the moment when one year ends and another begins. 1999/2000 holds especially rich memories, not least because of the deep sense of hope the dawn of a new Millennium brought. These hopes for a better world were encapsulated in the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals;

1. To eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. To achieve universal primary education
3. To promote gender equality and empower women
4. To reduce child mortality
5. To improve maternal health
6. To combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
7. To ensure environmental sustainability
8. To develop a global partnership for development.

These aspirations give substance to the words of the Lord's Prayer, "thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven".



However, the early years of this century have been difficult. Terrorist attacks, wars and now financial collapse have dented the optimism of 2000. But our hope does not rest in the constantly changing agenda of the daily news but in the Christ who first taught us to pray "thy kingdom come".

As I returned home from the inspiring "Joy in Ministry" conference called by Bishop Donald, encouraged by this deeper hope, I was reminded of the United Nations' Goals and their call to put into practice our aspirations for God's kingdom values.

I believe that New Year's Eve finds its true meaning on Christmas Eve, the moment upon which the Advent to Candlemas season hinges:
"O Holy Child of Bethlehem,
descend to us today...the hopes
and fears of all the years are met
in thee tonight".

May Christ the hope of the nations be with you in the coming year,

Bishop of Brixworth



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Around the diocese

Cracked pots discover new purpose

Some 300 lay and ordained ministers from the Peterborough Diocese found themselves being described as “cracked pots” by Dr Paula Gooder, one of the keynote speakers at their “Joy in ministry” conference in December.

They were not insulted, however, but encouraged. Referring to St Paul’s claim that “we have this treasure in clay pots” she pointed out that he was referring to lamps deliberately made with cracks, which acted as light diffusers. Christians, whatever their limitations or inadequacies, can diffuse the light of Christ in the world.

Paula Gooder’s Bible studies on 2 Corinthians combined with plenary talks by Bishop Donald and honorary assistant bishop Lindsay Urwin to provide food for thought at this first diocese-wide conference for ministers since 2006.

All the speakers sought to place “joy” in the context of a world which knows considerable sadness and stress. Bishop Donald reminded his listeners of the dangers of the “happiness movement”. “Life is mixed, work is



Dr Paula Gooder

mixed,” he said. “The happiness movement can reduce our effectiveness of knowing and experiencing joy in the face of pain and suffering.”

Held at The Hayes Conference Centre in Swanwick, Derbyshire, the conference also featured workshops on a wide range of topics led by diocesan and outside experts. Novelist and clergy wife Catherine Fox provided light relief with sometimes hilarious tales from church life.

A set of CDs of the talks will be available in the new year, and photos from the conference are on Flickr, accessed from the diocesan website.

New look for the diocese



The Diocese of Peterborough

The diocese has a new logo and house style which was used for the first time at the ministers’ conference.

“Our previous *house style* had an out-dated feel and did not

reflect the forward-looking and mission-orientated ethos that Bishop John and I are pursuing,” said Bishop Donald.

The logo and brand guidelines are on the website for parishes to use at: www.peterborough-diocese.org.uk/logo.htm

Around the diocese

Garden centre carol service ends with skating bishop

Taking the Church into the community took an icy turn at Mears Ashby when the church took up the invitation of the local garden centre, Beckworth's Emporium, to hold a carol service there after the shoppers had left on a Sunday evening in December.

"People came from miles around," said Duncan Beet, Priest in Charge. "The population of Mears Ashby is only about 500 but we had over 400 people at the service."



Bishop John preached during the worship and reflected, amongst other things, on the life of St Boniface and what each person present could do for Christ.

Not only did Beckworth's Emporium

provide a spacious venue, they also offered free use of their skating rink after the service - an invitation that Bishop John and about 80 others were keen to take up. Mulled wine and mince pies were also served, free of charge.

Publicity on the BBC Radio Northamptonshire Sunday programme had helped to spread the word about the event, which was a collaboration with the Kettering Salvation Army.



The Salvation Army Youth Band accompanied the carols and children from Mears Ashby and Sywell Church schools read during the service. A collection was taken for the Daylight Centre (for the homeless) in Wellingborough.

It is the second year that the Mears Ashby group of churches have held their carol service at the garden centre. Their congregation the first year was 270, but garden centres have a way of making things grow!

Around the diocese

St Peter's Oundle champions Fair Trade with market

St Peter's Church, Oundle, held a Fair Trade and Eco Market on Saturday 12 November. The church, still decorated with hangings and "stained-glass windows" made by local school pupils as part of The Big Draw, was a hive of activity all morning.



Products on sale included brightly-striped hand-woven Mexican scarves, bags made from recycled inner-tubes, jewellery from South Africa, carvings from Argentina, aloe vera body lotion from Kenya, local organic bread, vegetables and free-

range eggs, and Fair Trade foods from around the world.

The work of St Peter's Green Group and Oundle Transition Town Group, as well as the proposal for installing photo-voltaic cells on part of the church roof, were on show.

Fair Trade refreshments and home-made cakes were very popular and raised £168 for church funds. Local musician Nick Penny demonstrated how to make musical instruments from junk materials and charity Christmas cards did a roaring trade.

The day was supported by the Midlands Co-op Foodstore in Oundle.

"Concerns about fair trade and the environment are clearly important not only to church people but to the wider public," said one of the organisers Eleanor Rayden, who chairs the Oundle Fairtrade Town committee.

Launde Abbey announces 2012 retreat programme

Launde Abbey, the diocesan retreat that we share with the Leicester Diocese, has announced a new programme of retreats for 2012.

Amongst those leading retreats are John Bell of the Iona Community and the writer, Angela Ashwin. Quiet days are held monthly.

Parishes from our diocese can take advantage of special rates when they

when taking a group to Launde for an away day or social event.



For more details call the Business Manager, Nick Quinn on 01572 717254. www.launde.org.uk