

Autumn Newsletter 2008



REGENERATION AND LEGACY

What does London 2012 mean to you ? Endless hype, breathless commentators, ecstatic athletes, disappointed young hopefuls, drug scandals, glitz and overkill media coverage or a major opportunity to breathe life back into a rundown and socially disadvantaged community ?



'Less about projects, more about people !' was the theme of the Social Responsibility Net conference which I attended at Purfleet in the Thames Gateway area of Essex, from where we visited the London Olympic Park site at Stratford and saw the huge need for urban regeneration in the surrounding districts.

Bishop Laurie Green, Bishop of Bradwell, spoke first of the opportunities and challenges inherent in modern developments, drawing on the mistakes of the past which have led to the degeneration of new build areas into modern slums at one end of the spectrum, and the increase in new gated communities creating separate 'exclusive' social groups at the other. A traditional community, linked to notions of 'place' and 'identity' takes 20 years to establish but in modern times we have also to think in terms of non spatial electronic communities, relationships and integrity. Encouraging us not to demonise developers he stressed the vital and central role of the Church, which can offer presence, commitment, 'linking capital', physical and spiritual resources.

His theme was echoed by Canon Duncan Green the Church of England's Olympic Co-ordinator for 2012. His mission to ensure the presence of God in every aspect of the Games, working with a multi-faith, multi-agency approach for community engagement, offers major opportunities for all churches. This applies as much nationally as locally, since there are venues for training camps throughout the country, and Cultural Olympiad events have already begun.

'The Legacy of the Olympics for Stratford and beyond' was explored by Tom Russell, Head of Olympics Legacy for the London Development Agency, who explained that the opportunity to transform the social and economic conditions of East London was the determining factor in awarding the Games to London. The estimated costs of £9.3 billion will translate the vision into reality. By 2010 the Stratford International Station will be open, providing 2 hour journeys to Paris. In the long term there will be a network of public transport, waterways, housing, commercial buildings, shopping malls and recreational spaces offering a safe, attractive, clean working and living environment to rival any area of London.

It was a fascinating and inspiring conference which emphasised the opportunities for community building and ministry.

Hilary Lavis, October 2008

Thoughts from the Chairman..... 'One World?'



As I write the US Senate and Congress are struggling to agree a package which, hopefully, will restore confidence to the international financial markets.

As the drama has unfolded in recent weeks what has become crystal clear is that we cannot isolate ourselves from the world's woes. We live in a global age, which turns out to be much more of a reality than many of us realised. Who would have thought that dodgy mortgage lending in the US could so dramatically affect our economy in Britain?

Secondly, the whole system around which our lives are built turns out to be a lot more fragile than we had no business thinking it wasn't in the first place. The dramatic growth of the economies of China, India and Brazil, with their new burgeoning middle classes, not only results in much higher food prices as demand soars, but also in alarming increases in oil prices and CO₂ production. It is hard to argue that they should cut CO₂ production when, per capita, the West, and the USA in particular, are still the major polluters. And Russia, now back on the world stage as a major player, shows its muscle in using gas supplies to a dependent Western Europe as a political tool.

In all this complex and alarming crisis, it is, as usual, the poorest people around the world who suffer most. Inability to afford food, cutbacks in Aid, rising sea levels and severe weather events always hit the poor worst. It was notable that, when New Orleans was threatened by a hurricane recently, there was massive press coverage. However, there was hardly any coverage of the same hurricane's path through Haiti and Cuba where hundreds of people were killed and thousands lost their homes.

I am reminded of John Dunne's famous sermon which rings even more true than when he preached it 400 years ago.

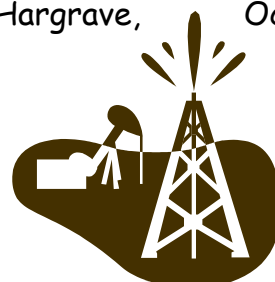
'No man is an Island entire of itself. Every man is a piece of the Continent, a part of the main. Any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind. And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls. It tolls for thee.'

Ultimately, none of us can live at ease while so many of God's people continue to suffer the consequences of the greed and indifference of those of us who, until recently, thought we'd got it made. Alan Hargrave, October 2008



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A Reflection on PRISONS WEEK 16-22 November 2008

From the Revd. Martin Kettle, Senior Manager at HMP Whitemoor:

I was driving to HMP Whitemoor today when it got a mention on the morning news. Prisons are always news for some reason or other. And behind the headlines is a legion of people needing prayer. Victims, offenders, the families of both, and people who work in prisons. Chaplains, prison visitors and volunteers, Christians working in prison, people working or living in prison who find the faith shaken out of them by the clang of the gates and all that it stands for.

Prisons Week has been calling us to pray for over 30 years. This year it's 16th to 22nd November. (So the 16th is the Sunday.) The theme is 'Worthless or Talented?'

There's an excellent website - www.prisonswweek.org. You can download a prayer leaflet (which is really good - designed by Barbed, a design company based in HM Prison Coldingley and supported by the Howard League for Penal Reform). There's also a really good PowerPoint (yes, I know, but it has good visuals, not your usual dismal bullet points). There's an outline sermon (which you might like, but I wouldn't cross the road for it), a sketch (bit of cringe factor there) and some good additional prayers.

You can order lots of copies of the prayer leaflet via the website. Or contact The Secretary, Prisons Week, PO Box 2733, Lichfield, Staffs. WS13 6GZ.. If you want a speaker from among the members of the Diocesan Criminal Justice Forum for any occasion during Prisons Week, feel free to contact me, or Hilary Lavis at Diocesan Office.

I'd be grateful if you could let me know what you do to observe Prisons Week - mdkettle@msn.com.

Thanks for your fellowship in prayer for those at the margins.

Martin Kettle
Chair, Ely Diocesan Criminal Justice Group

The Prisons Week Prayer

Lord, you offer freedom to all people,
We pray for those in prison,
Break the bonds of fear and isolation
that exist. Support with your love
prisoners and their families and
friends, Prison staff and all who care.
Heal those who have been wounded
by the activities of others, especially
the victims of crime. Help us to
forgive one another, to act justly, love
mercy and walk humbly together with
Christ in His strength and in His
Spirit, now and everyday. Amen





NOTICEBOARD

Fairtrade Clerical Shirts !

As we move forward on the Fairtrade Diocese campaign for 2009 – all parishes have been sent information on how to register, and details are now on the diocesan website - www.ely.anglican.org/fairtrade - we have also been informed that from November, members of the clergy will be able to buy fairly traded clerical shirts. This initiative is being organised by the Revd. Simon Butler who informs us that the shirts are certified as being made with 100% Fairtrade cotton from Africa, and produced by an FLO certified company in Mauritius. For further information see www.fairtradeclergyshirts.co.uk or contact simon@fairtradeclergyshirts.co.uk.



Clothes for Oakington – Many thanks to everyone who responded to the appeal for mens' clothes for those detained at Oakington. There is still a need for more, especially warm winter jackets and sweaters. As before, if you can help please contact Della Fletcher: 01223 841783 or kdf@waitrose.com

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Cambridgeshire Community Foundation Small Grant Funding

Funds for Cambridgeshire Charities or voluntary groups seeking revenue or capital funding may be available through Grassroots Grants (funded by the Office of the Third Sector). See www.eastspace.net/ccf/documents/Grassroots_grants_guidelines on the CCF website: www.cambscf.org.uk or contact Jane Darlington, Cambridge Community Foundation on 01223 421588.

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Guidelines for the inclusion of adults with aspergers and autism

The Diocese of Oxford has just published some very useful guidelines for the inclusion of adults with aspergers and autism. They can be consulted on www.oxford.anglican.org/bsr/justcare/autism_guidelines.html

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'Don't Stop at the Lights: Church plan for a year of action on tackling climate change' by Claire Foster and David Shreeve

This new publication from the Church of England includes ideas for practical action throughout the year to reduce congregations' carbon footprints. It includes resources for sermons, suggestions for parish activities and bible study notes. For Advent one idea is to set up a decoratios swap shop.

Endorsed by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London, the 148 page book is available from Christian bookshops, or by mail order via www.chpublishing.co.uk at a cost of £14.99.

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