



ECHO

19TH NOVEMBER 2021

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ECUMENICAL CHURCH OF OCCITANIE www.ourchurch.fr

THE NEW GENERAL SYNOD OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND MEETS FOR THE FIRST TIME



In a ceremony tinged with sadness that the Queen was unable to be present owing to illness, the General Synod of the Church of England - the Church's law-making body - began its 5-year term this week in London.

HRH Prince Edward the Earl Of Wessex deputised for his mother in welcoming the new delegates to what will be a busy 5 years for the Church. He took time to joke about himself as the 'piece of cardboard temporarily covering the missing pane of glass'.

60% of the Synod members, all of whom were elected in some very tough contests, are newcomers, the largest-ever intake of new members, and most have come determined to make the Church ready for the 21st Century.

Questions relating to the proper conduct of both ordained and lay ministers and officers will be reviewed, as will issues relating to how Christians of different sexual orientation will worship together.

Another mark of the 21st Century is that cyber-bullying will be considered early in 2022, and some complex legal issues relating to allowing Dioceses which have substantial financial reserves to come to the aid of the poorer ones while remaining compliant with Charity Law. The whole structure of how the Church of England is managed jointly by clergy and laity will also be reviewed.

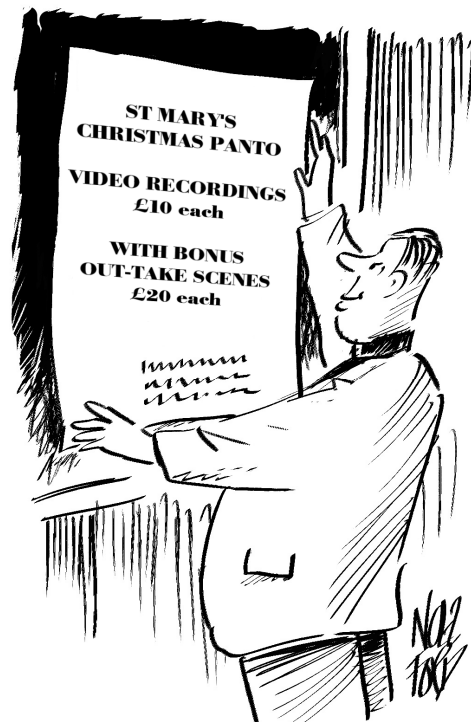
Two immediately controversial issues arose at Synod:

Firstly a demonstration by a large number of Synod members against a new law in Ghana against gay rights during the speech by



Archbishop Justin Welby, and Secondly when Archbishop Justin apologised for the Church's poor handling of allegations of historic complaints against Bishop George Bell and formally withdrew his previous comments that there was a cloud over Bishop Bell's good name.

It is likely that there will many other stormy moments over the coming 5 years.



Reverend Johnson found an ingenious way of increasing the fund-raising from the church's Christmas Panto



NEXT WEEK'S WORSHIP AT

ECO

We have set out below our programme of worship for next week. For all details of our latest worship, always go to the Home Page of our website:

www.ourchurch.fr

Sunday 21st November

10:30 am - Online Communion for the Feast of Christ the King

As we come to the end of the Church Year, the Feast of Christ the King looks forward to the end of time when the Kingdom of Jesus will be established to the end of the earth, and Advent next week is the season when the Church prepares for His second coming. Please join us for our Online Communion, followed by our usual Zoom Virtual Coffee Bar.

Tuesday November 23rd

19:00 - An Iona Service of Evening Prayer

This is a short service of prayer and readings from the Bible which is available as a video and also as a Podcast to download and listen to at the close of the day. We also provide the order of service in .PDF for you to download and keep so that you can follow it on your smartphone, tablet or computer if you wish.

Thursday November 25th

19:00 - A Service of Prayer for Healing

Please note the change in date to Friday for our regular service of prayer for those in need of God's healing touch at this time. If you would like us to pray by name for anyone in this service, please send their first name to **contact@ourchurch.fr** by no later than 18:00 on Wednesday 24th November.

Zacchaeus - the man who climbed a tree and changed his life

17th November was the Feast Day of Saint Zacchaeus of Palestine. Luke 19 vv 1 - 10 tells the story of how one man, wracked with the sin of his unjust life, sought out the Saviour in his desire to change his life and restore justice to those that he had wronged.

In Westminster Abbey on Tuesday 16th, the members of the General Synod of the Church of England gathered to worship together at the start of their new 5-year term of office. The sermon was delivered by Archbishop Angelaos, the Coptic Orthodox Church's General Bishop in the United Kingdom and the Bishop of the Coptic Diocese of London.

Archbishop Angelaos preached about Zacchaeus, who wanted to be freed of his sinful past, and felt called to come to Jesus. Jesus, in seeing Zaccheus, called to him to come down from his tree so that He could enter his house that very day. The Harvest of a soul seeking to come to God simply awaited someone to look up and bring it to God.

The Archbishop told the Synod Members - and all Christians - never to miss an opportunity to restore justice where those who have done wrong wish to change themselves and desire to be found by God and welcomed back into his Kingdom. He alerted Members of Synod that there were many Zacchaeus' in many trees waiting to repent and return to God.

You can listen to the full sermon online at

<https://soundcloud.com/archbishopangaelos/meeting-zacchaeus-sermon-at-westminster-abbey>



Archbishop Angelaos in Westminster



Worship for the Young and the Young At Heart

This weekend, our friend in the Diocese of St Albans, Margaret Pritchard Houston has published a short video entitled dedicated to the Feast of Christ The King. You will find a link to this on our web page for this Sunday's Service.