



Annual retreat with R S Thomas for Priests & Licensed Lay Ministers

The Fellowship of the Holy Spirit was founded by Canon Ralph Peacey of Bristol Cathedral to encourage clergy in our diocese to make an annual corporate retreat and the keeping of ordination vows. For full information, please visit: <http://tinyurl.com/kvxdbg>

Please give us some feedback!!

We are always on the lookout for feedback from every member of the diocese; if you would like to suggest something, please do visit; <http://tinyurl.com/nmozmq>
And if you could take a few seconds to tell us what you think of this newsletter, please visit; <http://tinyurl.com/qrtg49>

God Goss looking for support on Heart Bristol Radio

Twice each Sunday, Heart Bristol broadcasts a 60-second 'showbiz' style round-up of stories of Christian and religious news, broadcast as part of a regular commercial break. Sadly, God Goss will cease to be broadcast on the station from September, unless sufficient funds can be found to pay for airtime. Each month's slots cost around £600. Can you, or your church, afford just £10 or £20 a month towards that cost as your contribution to helping God Goss stay on air? Please visit: <http://tinyurl.com/m7qff6> for the full story.

For further information, or to send donations, please contact Ali Burnett by emailing burnett783@btinternet.com



/ get in touch

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Pictured: Stuart Taylor and Philip Rowe visit Uganda with Willie Akena in January 2009

A Ugandan Adventure - Latest date for bookings October 15th

Our Diocesan Link with Uganda offers us many opportunities for learning and growth. Spending time in a different culture and experiencing the life of the church in new ways can renew our vision and bring us home with new energy and hope.

We have six places still available for a study trip to Uganda in January 2010. The trip is designed to encourage people who are already actively engaged in ministry, or who are wondering if God is calling them to serve him in new ways. Readers, evangelists, youth leaders, pastoral assistants, people exploring vocation, or anyone wondering if they might be called to serve overseas. However there may also be others who simply want to experience how our Christian life and service is expressed in another country.

Come, See, Learn ...

Come and be inspired by the beauty and people of Uganda. Enjoy spectacular countryside, beautiful wildlife and even ride with wild Zebras. See how God is at work, and discover new ways in which he can use your gifts and talents. Learn to minister alongside gifted individuals who are working in challenging conditions.

What will happen?

We will fly out to Uganda, and settle in with our hosts, enjoying a trip to the source of the Nile and taking part in Sunday services. This will be followed by two days orientation at Uganda Christian University. You will be introduced to the history of the church, the country, cultural issues, etc. and a

chance to get to know your 'mission' partners. Then alongside a Ugandan pastor or lay worker you will have the opportunity to go out into the field and share with them in visiting and outreach.

The group will be accompanied by a 'chaplain' who will be able to help and encourage reflection and learning, as well as support away from home. After a debrief, you will then depart on a short tour of Ugandan National Parks. Including a night at Mihingo Lodge and two nights in the Queen Elizabeth National Park.

How much will it cost?

The whole trip will cost £1,700 but will be subsidized by the Diocesan link by £500, so each participant will need to find £1,200 plus personal spending money. Full details on the Uganda Link web site: www.bristol-uganda.co.uk or ring Chris Dobson 0117 906 0105.

Related news: Father John Bradley

We have been deeply saddened by the news of the sudden death of Father John Bradley on Wednesday 12th August, one of the assistant priests at Westbury-on-Trym Parish Church. John was a long and loyal supporter of the Diocesan Link with Uganda. He was also Diocesan Organ Advisor and the Chairman of the Local Affirming Catholicism branch, and had had much to do with the recent very successful Day in the Cathedral with Archbishop Rowan. **Read more** on John Bradley's work; <http://tinyurl.com/koplps>



Books to make you think

Four books responding to modern criticism of the Christian faith.

“Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give a reason for the hope that you have”

1 Peter 3:15

This exhortation surely lays an obligation on each one of us to think seriously about what and why we believe so that we can give reason for it in our witness to others.

One thing we can be grateful to Richard Dawkins for is the opportunity that his writings have given for other writers, Christian and non-Christian alike, to demonstrate the errors and misrepresentations in his arguments particularly (but not solely!) when he steps outside the field of his expertise – evolutionary biology. In order to respond to the challenges that Dawkins and his fellow travellers seem to make to our faith I wish to suggest that you begin by exploring the following relatively short books.

The first suggestion is Keith Ward’s **‘The God Conclusion – God and the Western Philosophical Tradition’**. In this slim volume, he rigorously defends the thesis that belief in God “lies at the very basis of acceptance of the intelligibility of the universe, of the importance of morality, and of a deep understanding of the nature of human existence”. He does this by looking critically at the writings of many of the giants of Western philosophical tradition and the strengths of their arguments for the ‘God Conclusion’ and the weaknesses and misrepresentations of their arguments against it.

The second suggestion is **‘There is a God’** by Anthony Flew. Here, Flew charts his journey from youthful Methodism through convinced and evangelical atheist and finally to his conclusion that there must be a meta-

intelligence at work. Unsurprisingly, Dawkins and his fundamentalist atheist colleagues cannot tolerate dissent or defection and they claim that Flew has been ‘got at’ in his dotage. To me the arguments he adduces are strong and not in the least suggestive of dementia! I urge you to read it for yourself.

The third suggestion is another book by Keith Wood entitled **‘Why There Almost Certainly is a God’** (subtitled **Doubting Dawkins**). Here Wood analytically dissects and systematically demolishes arguments put forward by Dawkins in his ‘God Delusion’ and concludes with a very useful Further Reading List. Highly recommended!

Following books by two philosophers, my final recommendation, **‘God’s Undertaker; Has Science Buried God?’** is by the Oxford mathematician, John Lennox. By rigorous use of powerful arguments from a variety of scientific disciplines, Lennox concludes that, “far from Science having buried God, not only do the results of Science point towards his existence, but the scientific enterprise itself is validated by his existence”.

Although each of these books is relatively short they all demand and merit serious thought and consideration. You won’t get the full benefit from them by ‘the instant coffee approach’ by which I mean you need to do more than the intellectual equivalent of pouring hot water on freeze dried granules! Give them the time and thought they deserve and each of these recommendations will amply reward the effort.

Remember 1 Peter 3:15!!

Article by Gordon Stirrat.

For more information, and to comment on this article, please visit;
www.bristol.anglican.org/wordpress/?p=992

Places to look Weekly BBC Faith podcast

www.bbc.co.uk/podcasts/series/faith

From robber to fundraiser

Church Army Evangelist Paul Fitzpatrick tells ShareIt! magazine about how he left a life of crime to follow Christ - a true story of amazing grace:
<http://tinyurl.com/kuy6q8>

To Remember Our Children; Memorial Service

September 20th, 3pm.

The Annual Service of Remembrance will take place at Holy Rood Church, Groundwell Road, Swindon.

All who would like to mark the loss of a child, baby, or pregnancy, are more than welcome to attend this special service. Opportunity will be given during the Service to remember each individual who means so much.

Do you need a Website?

Peter Bell is a talented web site creator. As a vicar's son he has an understanding of your needs and will help you with any special requirements. For an example of his work, see the Wick Benefice web site, www.wickbenefice.net
Contact Peter at peter.j.k.bell@gmail.com or phone 07852 50158

Related news: Seminar on creating a church website:
<http://tinyurl.com/nfj2p7>

Feedback!

Please take a few seconds to tell us what you think of this newsletter, please visit;
<http://tinyurl.com/qrtg49>

To get in touch with the Diocesan News, simply email
samc@bristoldiocese.org

Housekeeping

Monthly Mailing:

Changes to roles and teams in the Diocese;
www.bristol.anglican.org/wordpress/?p=980
DAC: New guidance on trees for PCCs;
www.bristol.anglican.org/wordpress/?p=919
Vertical ladders guidance;
www.bristol.anglican.org/wordpress/?p=924
Save costs on utilities;
www.bristol.anglican.org/wordpress/?p=922
Counselling courses beginning in September;
www.bristol.anglican.org/wordpress/?p=942
Bristol Seminar: Creating a church website;
www.bristol.anglican.org/wordpress/?p=947

Estate ministry in Lockleaze;
<http://tinyurl.com/134v6q>
Latest update on the Kitgum Container;
www.bristol.anglican.org/churches/uganda/?p=1205
Bishop’s letter: September
www.bristol.anglican.org/wordpress/?p=1000
Bishop’s letter: August
www.bristol.anglican.org/wordpress/?p=928
Rural Christian news: ‘Country Ways’ mag;
www.bristol.anglican.org/wordpress/?p=940
Swine flu: Diocesan guidance for Clergy;
www.bristol.anglican.org/wordpress/?p=884
Praxis South event; Pasch with Pizzazz;
www.bristol.anglican.org/wordpress/?p=1004