

Taste + Savour

Clergy CME in the Diocese of Wakefield

October 2009

Missing you already!: feedback from the clergy conference

Statistics

Excluding speakers and other guests, 161 clergy and 2 Church Army Officers attended the conference (some as day visitors). Of these 136 were stipendiary clergy, and 25 self-supporting clergy were able to come. Also 8 retired clergy came at the invitation of their deaneries (all 11 deaneries had been asked if they wished to invite one of their retired clergy).

52 clergy could not come for one reason or another.

The cost of the three nights and meals was £29,642.09. Speakers' expenses and honoraria add another £1,500 to this.

Evaluation forms

We received 39 evaluation forms. The silent majority can perhaps be taken as a mixture of affirmation and apathy. What follows is not a scientific analysis of data, but a **general impression**

The conference was a very good experience and exceeded expectations, although starting on the back of a bank holiday and on the first day of the school year was a problem for some. (Sorry, the dates were fixed 3 years ago, and were the only ones we could get).

People liked the time together, and the conference seems to have been a shot in the arm for morale. A comment recurring from the last conference is that once every three years is too far apart. Could we have an annual 24-hours conference?

The programme was good, but sometimes felt a bit rushed. More space for silence would be appreciated, especially in chapel before and after services. Perhaps we might organise a walk during free time.

The speakers

All the speakers were rated highly, each in their own way. It did not go unnoticed that, excepting the Bishop's talk and John Rogerson's Bible studies, Change got a lot of coverage but explicit references to God were missing. Also, we tended towards the positive aspects of change without addressing the negative. All the speakers were middle-aged, and all except Grace were men: "a bit blokish", and a plea for us to invite the best young female theologians next time.

Stephen Cherry did an impressive job of reflecting-back, earthed in our own experience of ministry, and bravely foregrounded the unsaid.

Refreshment hour and Workshops

Most greatly appreciated these, although some of the workshops were presentations or lectures rather than participatory workshops.

Worship

Gordon Appleton's presence and contribution was appreciated.

Entertainment

Ian McMillan was a huge success, as was the ceilidh, which worked well. One person wondered why we need entertainment at all, and many appreciated the time just to catch up with others, perhaps in the bar.

Venue

People appreciated the venue, and the salubrious rooms. Some thought we were fed too well.

Stephen Kelly

Please email me if you'd like electronic copies of Grace Davie's powerpoint presentation, plus the text of her background paper, together with both James Burnell-Nugents presentations, and both Stephen Cherry's.

Bite size bits

Mental Health and Well-being for faith leaders.

An introductory/refresher day on Mental Health for faith leaders and pastoral ministers.

At Fieldhead Hospital, Wakefield

Wednesday 20th January 2010,
9.45am - 3.30pm

The course, including lunch, is free of charge but advance booking essential.

Topics include:

Understanding the main types of mental health problems.

Mental health and care in the community.

Pastoral responses to mental health issues

Spirituality and mental health

The role of faith communities in promoting spiritual and mental well-being

The Day involves presentations from various mental health practitioners.

Further details and booking form from:

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or tel 01924 327498

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Book Review

***The New Testament:
Freshly translated with a cutting-
edge commentary by Nicholas King***

Kevin Mayhew

ISBN 978-1-84417-493-5 paperback

Nicholas King is a Jesuit priest who teaches New Testament at Oxford. His new translation was brought to my attention by Helen-Ann Hartley, a young member of staff at Cuddesdon, who recommends it to everyone she meets.

What does it do? Nick King's translation tries to bring out the force of the original Greek so as to allow us to experience what it was like to hear or read the documents for the first time, bringing out the power that lurks beneath the surface. Chunks of text (with no verse numbers, as in the original) are interspersed with pithy comment to help us see what the text author is doing.

One simple example. King's translation of Mark's Gospel starts: "Beginning of the good news of Jesus Messiah Son of God". Thus, as in the original Greek, the first word of Mark's Gospel is not "the", but simply and forcefully "beginning". Beginning which has no end, if we take Mark's last words as the truncated sentence "For they were afraid ..." (16:8)

I bought my copy from Amazon for £9.99, and I use it daily now for the New Testament readings at Morning and Evening Prayer, and to enlighten my sermon preparation each week.

Nicholas King is now translating the Old Testament which will appear in four volumes.

The Wisdom Literature, available now

Isaiah to Malachi, 2010.

The Historical Books, 2012

The Pentateuch, 2013

Stephen Kelly