



THE LAMPSTAND

"You are the light of the world, a city set on a hill cannot be hidden" – Matthew 5:14

Sunday 30 December 2018 | Issue 2 | Coptic Orthodox Diocese of London Monthly Newsletter
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Joy and Fellowship at the Annual Christmas City Mission Party

by Daniella Ghobrial

Coptic City Mission held its annual Christmas Celebration at St Saviour's Church in Pimlico on Tuesday 18 December 2018. The night was filled with music, laughter, worship, prayer, and lots of joy, meaning that it was a great hit.

Coptic City Mission is a youth-led ministry aimed at serving the homeless in London. Volunteers gather every Tuesday night on the streets of Victoria and the Strand to distribute food, hot drinks and clothing to members of the public in need. Founded by Archbishop Angaelos in 2000, Coptic City Mission is running into its 18th year of ministry, and we are all so pleased to have had such a great turnout this Christmas.

Approximately 100 homeless sisters and brothers from across London paid a visit to St Saviour's church to join in with our Christmas festivities, and they were served by more than 50 of our volunteers who joined together to spread Christmas cheer to our friends in Christ. We were also joined by friends from several church groups and homeless organisations.

The day consisted of games, gifts, prizes, plenty of food, and most importantly, the opportunity to spread God's love. The joyous evening was then concluded by a heartfelt message by His Eminence Archbishop Angaelos, encouraging our servants and guests to spread the love they had received to other people, and thanked all those who visited for the blessing they gave us in serving them.





HAPPY NEW YEAR



As this year draws to a close, it is an opportune time to stop and take stock of what a wonderful year we have had as a diocesan family.

We give thanks for all who have not only shown interest, but have taken active steps to be involved in, a variety of ministries that will serve us all, some immediately, and others over time. It is precisely within this context that we come to a fuller understanding of what it means to be the Body of Christ, with many members working towards one cause, as Saint Paul says "so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another" (Romans 12:5).

I hope that this year has been a blessed one for you, individually, as families, and as communities. This is a time to take forward the good things we have experienced over the past year, leave behind the burdens we can, and continue to work through whatever struggles we may have, enjoying God's blessing upon us, guiding and prospering our every step as we journey individually and collectively towards His Kingdom.

My prayer for you all, as this year draws to a close, is that you have a blessed end to this year, and an even more blessed beginning to the next, and that it is a year filled with peace, joy, good health, success and fulfilment in our Lord Jesus Christ.



London Ministry Group



Find out more at www.ServingLondon.com

Recognition of Christians in the Middle East at Westminster Abbey

By Steven Ibrahim

On Tuesday 4 December 2018, a service was held at Westminster Abbey to celebrate the contributions of Christians in the Middle East. His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales attended this service where he reflected on the suffering and persecution of Christians in the region, remembering the thousands killed in Iraq and the Copts murdered on the coast in Libya. Leaders and representatives of various Churches in the region were amongst the attendees along with Reverend Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury. Our Coptic Orthodox church was represented by His Eminence Archbishop Angaelos, Archbishop of London, who participated in the prayers, and our London Coptic Diocesan Choir.

The service began with an introit, 'O King of Peace' Epou'ro, chanted by the London Coptic Diocesan Choir. For many of us in the choir, this service was one of a kind as it was spectacular to see all the support and solidarity expressed for our mother Church in

Egypt as well as many persecuted Churches in the region. The hymn was followed by the bidding given by the Dean of Westminster, where he highlighted the true purpose of the night as he prayed 'for all the people of the Holy Land and of the surrounding nations.' Reflections and addresses were then presented by the Prince of Wales and Patriarch Theophilos III of Jerusalem, and Archbishop Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, preached.

The words of Sister Nazek Matty were very touching, as she described the suffering of the Dominican sisters in Sienna, Iraq. Her story was sorrowful but also gave us all strength and hope as she emphasized their determination to continue to advocate for peace and love in the region.

The service then continued with prayers by Church leaders, and hymns sung by the Choir of the Syriac Orthodox Church in London, and the Octet of the Special Service Choir of Westminster Abbey.





The true essence of service discussed at weekend retreat

By Monica Bogtar

On Saturday 15 December, youth servants who serve throughout our Youth Ministry from parishes across the Diocese of London and beyond came together for a weekend full of fellowship, smiles and spiritual nourishment. Coming together with His Eminence Archbishop Angaelos, we spent the evening together as youth kicking off the retreat with a spiritual talk and discussion, covering service and dedication to Christ, and struggles that we may face in the process.

Sayedna focussed on Deuteronomy 7:9, "Therefore know that the Lord your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps His covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments," reminding us that our Lord is always faithful to His servants. Staying focused, sowing the seed and following the example of being a faithful steward, we also discussed how to

be a compassionate servant, standing by those we serve with supportive words, teaching, and action. This message helped revive our souls, ignite fellowship and encourage an open floor for a question and answer session with Sayedna as our father.

The discussion was followed by dinner together at the Centre making memories and spending time in wonderful fellowship with one another. This was followed by a beautiful evening of midnight praises and worship songs around the fire. Another cherished evening together, and the perfect way to end Saturday.

On Sunday morning, we celebrated liturgy together at St George Cathedral, followed by a cheerful session with Sayedna talking about "Being light in the darkness" that sealed the 2-day retreat perfectly.

Newly established Rituals committee of the Diocese of London

By John Asaad

Tuesday 5 December 2018 marked the inaugural meeting of the newly established Ritual Committee of the Diocese of London, hosted at St Mark Church in Kensington. The meeting was chaired by HE Archbishop Angaelos, and committee members represented all the parishes across the Diocese of London.

The Rituals Committee was established by His Eminence in order to unify ritual practices across the Diocese. To this end, the Committee is mandated to identify practices across the parishes, and researching the relevant rites, relying on historical manuscripts and sources, academic writings, and decrees of the Holy Synod. Committee members discuss the research and prepare a proposal. The work of the Committee will be presented to the Diocesan Clergy Council for discussion, decision and adoption. These decisions will be regularly published in the Lampstand and on the Diocesan website.

The Rituals Committee has now been tasked to consider the rites of the season of the Great Lent, and it is hoped that, in future, it will play a significant role in enabling unity, consistency and harmony for ritual practices across the Diocese of London.



The patron Saint Feast celebrated at St Mary and St Mercurius church in Risca

By Maria and Andrew Naguib

On Saturday 1 December 2018, the Church of St Mary and St Mercurius in Risca, South Wales, celebrated the feast of martyrdom of its Patron Saint, Saint Mercurius, which occurred on 25 Hathor 250 AD. This feast is celebrated annually under the patronage of HE Archbishop Angaelos.

His Eminence began the blessed day by celebrating the Divine Liturgy, which was attended by congregations from the parishes of the Coptic Diocese of London and

across the United Kingdom. Following the Liturgy, Archbishop Angaelos, along with the attending priests, anointed the holy relics of Saint Mercurius. The relics of Saint Mercurius were venerated around the Church with great honour, with the congregation taking the blessing of this great saint. Every member of the congregation was given a portion of the fragrant spices used to anoint the relics.

The stalls in the church hall, offering homemade food and Middle Eastern sweets to Christmas gifts and decorations took great effort and weeks of preparation by the congregation of the church, along with the support of other churches from across the United Kingdom. This was a chance for the parishes of the Coptic Diocese of London to show close cooperation and support for one another.

The Church of Saint Mary and Saint Mercurius would like to greatly thank HE Archbishop Angaelos for leading this blessed day in worship and the veneration of the great Saint Mercurius. The Church also presents its gratitude to the priests who attended with their congregation to support this event.





A Night of Celebration and Great Talent at the Annual Art and Film Awards 2018

By Maria Asaad

On Saturday 1 December the Art and Film Awards took place at The Coptic Orthodox Centre, to celebrate the unified creativity of members from the youth. It was a fun filled evening with youth from various parishes gathering at The Coptic Orthodox Centre to view this year's video entries, whilst enjoying the time of fellowship together. This year's theme was from Ecclesiastes 3:7, 'There is a time to be silent and a time to speak.' As every year, the scale of talent was exceptionally high and versatile with fresh angles and perspectives on the given theme. Entries this year came from:

- St George youth with a five-minute video entitled 'Let My People Go'

• St Mary and St Abraam youth with a fourteen-minute video entitled 'The Time is Now'

• Helen Youssef and Maria Benjamin with a one-minute video entitled 'Stop, Breathe'

• St George youth with a five-minute video entitled 'The Philosophers at Athens'

• Veronica Benjamin and Miret Habib with a three-minute video entitled 'Letter to A Friend'

Each video contained unique creativity, great acting skills, and presented various takes on the chosen theme.

The winners were as follows:

Best overall film - 'The Time is Now' by St Mary and St Abraam youth

Film with best screenplay - 'The Philosophers at Athens' by St George Youth

Film with best photography - 'Letter to A Friend' by Veronica Benjamin and Miret Habib

Film with best sound production - 'Let My People Go' by St George youth

Most creative/original film - 'Stop, Breathe' by Helen Youssef and Maria Benjamin

This year saw the exciting introduction of the Task Master, which saw five competitive individuals go head to head in a series of challenges, testing their varied skills, to see who would come out victorious. They were tested on things from their artistic skills to their ability using their initiative on the spot. The competitors were John Baseluoss and Simon Fakhouri from St Mary and Archangel Michael, Maria Issac from St Mary and St Shenouda, and John Fahmy and Emmanuel Ghali from St George. The overall winner and reigning champion was Emmenual Ghali.





HAPPY NEW YEAR!
wishing you blessings of the upcoming

Feast of the Holy Nativity

Jan **The Feast of the Holy Nativity**

6 Please check with your parish for timings of the Holy Liturgy

Jan **Project Ark Fundraiser**

12 St. Mary & Archangel Michael Church
Cranbourne Gardens,
NW11 0HS

Jan **Fundraising begins at 12pm after liturgy**

13

Jan **First Grapevine fellowship meeting for 2019**

9 20:00-21:00
St. Pancras Church, Euston Road, London, NW1 2BA

Jan **First St. Paul Liturgy for 2019**

13 10:00-11:30
St. Mary Le Bow Church, Cheapside, London, EC2V 6AU

Liturgy with HE Archbishop Angaelos on the following dates:

Jan **6** St Mark Church
Allen Street, London, W8

Jan **27** St Mary & St George
24 Gladding Rd,
London, E12 5DD

STAY
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