

MARCH 2020 NEWS FROM SEI

Supporting the St James Fund: This Fund was set up some years ago to offer assistance to SEI students who are in training or Curates/Lay Readers in their first year of ministry (IME 1-4). It supports such educational needs as overseas study, attendance at conferences and the purchase of study materials, and is also used for spiritual or emotional needs. Recently it has supported Godly Play training and extra-curricular study of New Testament Greek, has enabled one student to be guided over several months in *The Spiritual Exercises* and subsidised others attending preached Retreats outwith Scotland.



The Fund is administered by a Committee which scrutinises every application and apportions funds. One of the members of that team writes as follows: 'One of the joys of this role is seeing the growing depth of engagement, both spiritual and practical, that students at the SEI develop. I wrote recently to the Principal in response to an application:

I find myself most impressed by the thoughtful and prayerful approach that this student offers here - both in the way that they have tried to think and pray through their life circumstances and in their identification of a way of not simply coping with these life events but of using them to (i.e. allowing God to) direct them into a deeper spiritual engagement with their vocation. The desire to meet half the cost so that they have a tangible 'investment' in this programme shows great maturity. And reading the application prompts me to recognise the extent to which these applications to the St James Fund are themselves formative and prepared with care and insight. The question of any/extent of award increasingly seems to me to be secondary (although important). What we see is the willingness of the SEI students to confront problems, circumstances - and indeed, desires - and to articulate them and think through what the church (via, here, the Fund) might be able to do to help. The notion that the church itself may provide help is a valuable one.

"The Fund thus exists not simply to provide financial assistance but has developed the role of helping in the formation of the students. Its value is great! But its current support (a donation of £250 per month) will soon come to an end. We must not let the Fund simply dwindle and disappear. **Can we find, across all in the SEC who support the Institute's work, ten or more donors who would commit to giving £10 a month?** We have one such offer already ... another nine ... or more ... can we?'

If **you** would like to be such a donor to this valuable form of student assistance, please contact SEI's Administrator, Linda Harrison - institute@scotland.anglican.org - who will send you a form.



New SEI Ambassador: The Revd Katrina O'Neill, Distinctive Deacon and Curate at Inverness Cathedral, has been appointed as the new Diocesan Ambassador for the Diocese of Moray, Ross and Caithness. As Bishop Mark wrote in commending her to this role: 'Katrina will be very good and persistent at this ministry.' Bishop Kevin, Convenor of the Institute Council, congratulated her in this way: 'Having seen you in action during the Bishops' visit to Inverness, I can think of no better ambassador for SEI'. Katrina herself said: "I am honoured to become the Ambassador and in this way let people know about the wonderful community and work that is done at SEI. As a former student I know how important that community is, and what it means to know that the Province is holding us in prayer and interested in what is happening during our training."

SEI becomes an Eco Congregation Part 2: In this edition of the Newsletter, *Eco-Congregation Scotland* student rep Val Cameron, seen here with Graeme McMeekin, the Director of Tearfund Scotland, continues her introduction to the scheme, detailing some of the ways we can each become involved.



✿ **Recycling:** Over 11 million tonnes of waste were produced in Scotland in 2017, around a quarter of which was from households. As individuals, perhaps we could look at what is in our waste. The Scottish Government target for recycling is 70% by 2025; at present the level is just over 50%. There is much to be done.

✿ **Transport:** Air pollution from traffic in the UK causes around 60,000 premature deaths per year. It is acknowledged that public transport in rural areas may be infrequent and travelling by car may be the only way to get around. In which case, try to make every journey count e.g. get your shopping while you are out visiting and co-ordinate this with the school run or office pick-up. Try to walk more or use a bike to save fuel; it's fun and good for your health.

✿ **Diet:** Whilst you may not wish to become vegetarian or vegan, try to check the source of the meat you buy, asking whether it is local, organic etc. You may wish to consider reducing your meat portion-size or try a plant-based diet 3 or 4 times a week. In addition it is possible to reduce your carbon footprint by buying in-season fruit and vegetables rather than imported varieties.

✿ **Heating:** Homes are a source of energy consumption and waste. A quick audit of the building and insulation measures will help to decide on improvements. Ask yourself whether there are gaps around doors, windows and service-entry points where draughts could be reduced and energy efficiency improved. It is known that reducing thermostats by 1°C can make a big difference on consumption and save around £80 pa in costs. Small changes such as not running water while shaving or brushing teeth, taking shorter showers, filling the washing machine at 30°C and using a watering can instead of a hosepipe, dramatically conserve water.

✿ **Clothing:** Buying new clothes to keep up with fashion is a societal norm. But consider whether you really need that new T-shirt or trousers and whether existing garments can be mended. Organically produced clothing can be expensive, so instead consider buying clothes from charity shops or re-use fabric to restyle or make new garments.

Periodic External Review: At the end of February, the Institute underwent the second part of the Periodic External Review process. The Inspection Team this time was led by Professor Mike Higton of the Department of Theology and Religion, University of Durham. Dr Higton is responsible for academic input into the University's validation of the Common Awards in Theology, Ministry and Mission. Other members of the Team comprised Ms Alyson Bird, Senior Quality Manager, Common Awards, Professor Jack Dyce and Rt Revd Dr Brian Smith. The team's report will now be matched with that from Ministry Division following the latter team's visit in January, and a report sent to SEI for inspection before publication.

SEI Training Fund: Huge thanks go this month to the congregation of **St Ninian's, Perth** (Diocese of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane) for the generous donation to the Fund of the offering uplifted at the 25th Anniversary Service of the Ordination of Women to the priesthood in December. Thanks also to the congregation of **St Mary and All Souls Coldstream** (Diocese of Edinburgh) for their kind donation, and to the **Revd Isobel Dowlen** for the gift of theological books which will be sold at the March Residential Weekend. **St Mary's Hamilton** (Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway) is thanked for its kind gift, as is the **Revd Sally Gorton** who continues to donate her deputising fees. Thanks go also to the **Revd Canon Dr Nicholas Taylor** for his generosity towards the Fund.